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INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO.
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INTERNATIONAL FILING DATE
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PRIORITY DATE CLAIMED
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TITLE OF INVENTION

PORTABLE RECEIVING AND/OR REPRODUCING DEVICE, REPRODUCING METHOD, AND RECORDING/REPRODUCING METHOD

APPLICANT(S) FOR DO/EO/US

TANABE PATENT OFFICE

MIAZAKI SHUICHI et al

Applicant herewith submits to the United States Designated/Elected Office (DO/EO/US) the following items and other information:

1. ☒ This is a **FIRST** submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.
2. ☐ This is a **SECOND** or **SUBSEQUENT** submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.
3. ☒ This express request to begin national examination procedures (35 U.S.C. 371(f)) at any time rather than delay examination until the expiration of the applicable time limit set in 35 U.S.C. 371(b) and PCT Articles 22 and 39(1).
4. ☐ A proper Demand for International Preliminary Examination was made by the 19th month from the earliest claimed priority date.
5. ☒ A copy of the International Application as filed (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2))
 - a. ☒ is transmitted herewith (required only if not transmitted by the International Bureau).
 - b. ☐ has been transmitted by the International Bureau.
 - c. ☐ is not required, as the application was filed in the United States Receiving Office (RO/US).
6. ☒ A translation of the International Application into English (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2)).
7. ☒ Amendments to the claims of the International Application under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(3))
 - a. ☐ are transmitted herewith (required only if not transmitted by the International Bureau).
 - b. ☐ have been transmitted by the International Bureau.
 - c. ☒ have not been made; however, the time limit for making such amendments has NOT expired.
 - d. ☐ have not been made and will not be made.
8. ☐ A translation of the amendments to the claims under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(3)).
9. ☐ An oath or declaration of the inventor(s) (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(4)).
10. ☐ A translation of the annexes to the International Preliminary Examination Report under PCT Article 36 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(5)).

Items 11. to 16. below concern document(s) or information included:

11. ☐ An Information Disclosure Statement under 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98.
12. ☐ An assignment document for recording. A separate cover sheet in compliance with 37 CFR 3.28 and 3.31 is included.
13. ☐ A **FIRST** preliminary amendment.
☐ A **SECOND** or **SUBSEQUENT** preliminary amendment.
14. ☒ A substitute specification.
15. ☐ A change of power of attorney and/or address letter.
16. ☒ Other items or information:

1. Formal Drawings 45 fig. 32 sheets

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17. ☒ The following fees are submitted:

BASIC NATIONAL FEE (37 CFR 1.492(a)(1)-(5)):

Neither international preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482)
nor international search fee (37 CFR 1.445(a)(2)) paid to USPTO
and International Search Report not prepared by the EPO or JPO \$970.00

International preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) not paid to
USPTO but International Search Report prepared by the EPO or JPO \$860.00

International preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) not paid to USPTO but
international search fee (37 CFR 1.445(a)(2)) paid to USPTO \$690.00

International preliminary examination fee paid to USPTO (37 CFR 1.482)
but all claims did not satisfy provisions of PCT Article 33(1)-(4) \$670.00

International preliminary examination fee paid to USPTO (37 CFR 1.482)
and all claims satisfied provisions of PCT Article 33(1)-(4) \$96.00

ENTER APPROPRIATE BASIC FEE AMOUNT =

\$ 860.00

Surcharge of \$130.00 for furnishing the oath or declaration later than ☐ 20 ☐ 30
months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 CFR 1.492(e)).

\$

CLAIMS	NUMBER FILED	NUMBER EXTRA	RATE
Total claims	35 - 20 =	15	X \$ 20.00
Independent claims	6 - 3 =	3	X \$ 80.00

\$ 300.00

\$ 240.00

MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM(S) (if applicable)

+ \$260.00

\$

TOTAL OF ABOVE CALCULATIONS =

\$1,400.00

Reduction of 1/2 for filing by small entity, if applicable. A Small Entity Statement
must also be filed (Note 37 CFR 1.9, 1.27, 1.28).

\$

SUBTOTAL =

\$ 1,400.00

Processing fee of \$130.00 for furnishing the English translation later than ☐ 20 ☐ 30
months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 CFR 1.492(f)).

\$

TOTAL NATIONAL FEE =

\$

Fee for recording the enclosed assignment (37 CFR 1.21(h)). The assignment must be
accompanied by an appropriate cover sheet (37 CFR 3.28, 3.31). \$40.00 per property +

\$

TOTAL FEES ENCLOSED =

\$1,400.00

Amount to be
refunded:

\$

charged:

\$

a. ☒ A check in the amount of \$ 1,400.00 to cover the above fees is enclosed.

b. ☐ Please charge my Deposit Account No. _____ in the amount of \$ _____ to cover the above fees.
A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

c. ☒ The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required, or credit any
overpayment to Deposit Account No. 03-3125. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

NOTE: Where an appropriate time limit under 37 CFR 1.494 or 1.495 has not been met, a petition to revive (37 CFR 1.137(a) or (b)) must be filed and granted to restore the application to pending status.

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DESCRIPTION

PORTABLE RECORDING AND/OR REPRODUCING DEVICE, REPRODUCING METHOD, AND RECORDING/REPRODUCING METHOD

Technical Art

The present invention relates to a portable recording and/or reproducing device, reproducing method, and recording/reproducing method, and more particularly, is suitably applicable to a portable digital reproducing device which can reproduce music data.

Background Art

Recently, portable digital reproducing devices have been proposed, which record music data in a built-in semiconductor memory, and reproduce the music data from the semiconductor memory.

By the way, the portable digital reproducing devices are brought in bags, or in pockets of jackets.

However, when such a portable digital reproducing device is carried, a manipulating part provided on the portable digital reproducing device is hidden in the bag or the pocket of a jacket, which causes a bothering problem in which the digital reproducing device has to be taken from the bag or the pocket of the jacket every time when music data is reproduced by manipulating the manipulating part.

P O S T M A N

To solve the above problem, the present invention prepares: a reproducing means for performing reproducing processing on digital data which is read out from a predetermined recording medium recording the digital data; a manipulating means for making an order of reproducing the digital data recorded on a recording medium; a control means for reading the digital data from the recording medium in response to the reproduction order which is input with the manipulating means and sending it to the reproducing means and for controlling the reproducing means so as to perform the reproducing processing on the digital data; and a cylindrical housing case which contains the reproducing means and the control means. In addition, the manipulating means is provided on a surface of one end side with respect to a longitudinal direction of the cylindrical housing case.

Brief Description of Drawings

2

digital music contents.

Fig. 2(A) is a schematic diagram explaining the download of the digital music contents from an EMD server to a computer device.

Fig. 2(B) is a schematic diagram explaining the upload of the digital music contents from the computer device to a digital reproducing device.

Fig. 2(C) is a schematic diagram explaining the reproduction limits of the digital music contents.

Fig. 3 is a brief linear oblique perspective view showing the constitution of the digital reproducing device according to this embodiment.

Fig. 4(A) is a left side view showing the constitution of the left side of the digital reproducing device.

Fig. 4(B) is a front view showing the constitution of the front of the digital reproducing device.

Fig. 4(C) is a right side view showing the constitution of the right side of the digital reproducing device.

Fig. 4(D) is a back view showing the constitution of the back of the digital reproducing device.

Fig. 5 is a schematic diagram explaining the digital reproducing device to which a dangling strap is attached.

Fig. 6 is a schematic diagram explaining the digital reproducing device which is dangled from a user's neck by using the dangling strap.

Fig. 7 is a brief linear oblique perspective view explaining

the insertion of the plug into a headphone jack.

Fig. 8 is a schematic diagram explaining the digital reproducing device attached to a breast pocket.

Fig. 9 is a brief-linearly exploded perspective view showing the internal construction of the digital reproducing device.

Fig. 10(A) is a schematic cross-sectional diagram showing the internal construction of a dry battery containing part.

Fig. 10(B) is a schematic cross-sectional diagram showing the accommodating of a conducting board in the dry battery containing part.

Fig. 11(A) is a brief linear perspective view showing the external appearance of a serial label.

Fig. 11(B) is a brief linearly exploded perspective view showing the construction of the serial label.

Fig. 12 is a brief linear oblique perspective view showing the construction of a display protecting member.

Fig. 13 is a brief linear oblique perspective view showing the construction of the display.

Fig. 14(A) is a brief linearly up-side view showing one side of a sub circuit board.

Fig. 14(B) is a brief linearly bottom-side view showing the other side of the sub circuit board.

Fig. 15(A) is a brief linearly up-side view showing one side of a main circuit board.

Fig. 15(B) is a brief linearly bottom-side view showing the

other side of the main circuit board.

Fig. 16(A) is a brief linearly side view explaining the connection between the sub circuit board and the main circuit board.

Fig. 16(B) is a brief linearly up-side view explaining the connection between the sub circuit board and the main circuit board.

Fig. 17 is a brief linearly oblique perspective diagram explaining the mounting of the display protecting member on the front side case.

Fig. 18 is a brief linearly oblique perspective diagram explaining the mounting of the display.

Fig. 19 is a brief linearly oblique perspective diagram explaining the accommodating of the main circuit board and the sub circuit board in the housing case.

Fig. 20 is a brief linearly oblique perspective diagram explaining the fitting of the back side case to the front side case.

Fig. 21 is a brief linearly oblique perspective diagram explaining the accommodating of the sub circuit board in the front side case.

Fig. 22 is a brief linearly oblique perspective diagram explaining the accommodating of the main circuit board in the housing case.

Fig. 23 is a partly cut-off brief linearly cross-sectional

diagram explaining the flow of static electricity to the main circuit board.

Fig. 24 is a brief linear side view explaining the assembling of the display protecting member and the sub circuit board.

Fig. 25 is a partly cut-off brief linearly side view explaining the flow of static electricity from the display protecting member to the sub circuit board.

Fig. 26 is a block diagram showing the circuit constitution of the digital reproducing device.

Fig. 27 is a brief linear diagram showing the data structure of the digital music contents.

Fig. 28 is a brief linear diagram showing the data structure in a header (1).

Fig. 29 is a brief linear diagram showing the data structure in the header (2).

Fig. 30 is a brief linear diagram explaining the data structure of the semiconductor flash memory when the FAT is accommodated.

Fig. 31 is a schematic cross-sectional diagram explaining the housing case which is formed depending to a width of the main circuit board.

Fig. 32 is a schematic cross-sectional diagram explaining the housing case which is formed depending to the outside diameter of a dry battery for driving.

[illegible]

Fig. 34 is a schematic diagram showing the configuration of a connecting part in the strap.

Fig. 35 is a schematic diagram showing a sticking tape which is attached to a part of a strap string.

Fig. 36 is a schematic diagram showing the configuration of a guide which is provided on the strap string.

Fig. 37 is a schematic diagram showing the configuration of the whole digital reproducing device to which the dangling strap in another embodiment.

Fig. 38 is a schematic diagram showing the dangling strap in another embodiment.

Fig. 39 is a schematic diagram showing the configuration of the whole digital reproducing device having the dangling strap attached in another embodiment.

Fig. 40 is a schematic diagram showing the configuration of the dangling strap in another embodiment.

Fig. 41 is a schematic diagram showing the configuration of a guide in another embodiment.

Fig. 42 is a schematic diagram showing the configuration of a guide in another embodiment.

Fig. 43 is a schematic diagram showing the configuration of a guide in another embodiment.

Fig. 44 is a schematic diagram showing the configuration of a guide in another embodiment.

Fig. 45 is a schematic diagram showing the configuration of the dangling strap in another embodiment.

Best Mode for Carrying Out the Invention

One embodiment of the present invention will be described in detail hereinafter with reference to the drawings.

(1) Utilization of electronic music distribution service

Recently, an electronic music distribution service called EMD (Electronic Music Distribution) for distributing digital music contents using a computer network on Internet has been proposed.

As shown in Fig. 1, in this kind of electronic music distribution service, digital music contents C1 is distributed from an EMD server 1 for supplying contents, to a personal computer (hereinafter, referred to as a computer device) 3 at home on Internet 2.

In the computer device 3, the digital music contents C1 distributed from the EMD server 1 is downloaded in a built-in hard disk to be reproduced in accordance with user's operation, so that the user can listen to the music at any time.

Such an electronic music distribution service has two kinds of purchase methods. One is called "purchase" in which the digital music contents C1 downloaded from the EMD server 1 in the computer device 3 can be reproduced anytime again and again, just like a CD (Compact Disc). The other is a new method and is called "with reproduction limitation" in which the reproducible term or the

reproducible number of times is limited in stead of a low-cost service.

Thus, when an user purchases the digital music contents C1 from the EMD server 1 with "with reproduction limitation", the user can reproduce the purchased digital music contents C1 within the limited term or the limited number of times with the computer device 3.

Further, the computer device 3 connects to the portable digital reproducing device 4 internally having a non-volatile semiconductor flash memory as a storing means, with a USB (Universal Serial Bus) cable. Thereby, the digital music contents C1 can be uploaded through the USB cable in the semiconductor flash memory of the digital reproducing device 4 as digital data.

Thus, the user can reproduce the digital music contents C1 with "with reproduction limitation", within the reproducible term and reproducible number of times with the digital reproducing device 4, as well as with the computer device 3. Therefore, the user can casually listen to high-sound-quality music through a headphone 5, even outside.

Actually, as shown in Fig. 2(A), the digital music contents C1 with "with reproduction limitation" downloaded from the EMD server 1 in the computer device 3 is composed of a header H1 and music data D1 integratedly. The header H1 includes various information relating to the reproduction limitation such as the reproducible term, the reproducible number of times, and the

direction (hereinafter, referred to as case longitudinal direction) of the housing case 10, and a plastic USB (Universal Serial Bus) connector cover 13 is provided to open and close an opening part (not shown) in which a USB connector is contained.

Practically, the USB connector cover 13 protects the USB connector, by closing the opening part so that the USB connector is integrated with the housing case 10 when the USB connector is not used. On the other hand, the USB connector cover 13 opens the opening part when the USB connector is used, so that the USB connector can be connected to the computer device 3 with the USB cable (not shown).

Further, as shown in Fig. 4(B), on the front plane of the housing case 10, a volume up button 14, a volume down button 15, a forwarding button 16, a rewinding button 17, the display window 11, and a shift button 18 are successively provided between the nearly center and one end of the housing case 10. Moreover, on one plane of the housing case 10, a play/stop button 19 which can input reproduction instruction and stop instruction is provided.

Then, in the front of the housing case 10, a display (not shown) provided under the display window 11 displays in accordance with various operations, so that the display contents can be shown through the display window 11.

In this connection, when the forwarding button 16 is pressed while the shift button 18 is pressed, the shift button 18 functions as an operating button for changing the reproduction

one end side. At an adjacent place between the jack holding part 25 and the clip part 26, and at a predetermined position which is shifted from the center of gravity of the digital reproducing device 4, a ring-shaped strap fitting 27 is provided.

The strap fitting 27 can rotate freely within approximately 180 degrees, between the position in contact with the jack holding part 25 and the position in contact with the clip part 26, on the back plane of the housing case 10. By holding the strap fitting 27 up, various straps can be fitted or removed easily.

Here, the digital reproducing device 4 is different from a recording/reproducing device having a mechanical recording/reproducing mechanism such as a hard disk drive, etc. , and as described above in Fig. 1, the digital music contents C1 is recorded and reproduced in and from the internal semiconductor flash memory, so that the music data D1 of the digital music contents C1 can be reproduced without generation of sound jumping even under an environment marked by vibration.

On this account, in the digital reproducing device 4, as shown in Fig. 5, a plug 29 provided in a headphone code 28 is inserted into the headphone jack 24, so that the user can usually listen to analog audio obtained by reproducing the music data D1 from the semiconductor flash memory through the headphone 5.

At this time, a band-type dangling strap 31 is fitted to the strap fitting 27 so as to use the digital reproducing device which is dangled from user's neck.

By the way, the digital reproducing device 4 weighs about 25 [g], excepting a dry battery for driving 21. Most of various parts constituting the digital reproducing device 4 are provided on one end side in the longitudinal direction of the case. Also, since the digital reproducing device 4 loads the dry battery for driving 21 which weighs about 23 [g], for example, into the dry battery containing part 22 provided at the other end side in the longitudinal direction of the case, when the dry battery for driving 21 is loaded, the center of gravity is almost the center in the longitudinal direction of the case.

Then, in the digital reproducing device 4, as shown in Fig. 6, when the dangling strap 31 is used to dangle the device 4 from user's neck, the fitting position, the fulcrum, of the strap fitting 27 is fixed a little to one end side from the center of gravity in the longitudinal direction of the case, so that the other end side of the housing case 10 orients toward the vertical down direction. Thus, the digital reproducing device 4 is maintained to have a position that a play/stop button 19, which is provided at one end side of the housing case 10, orients toward the vertical up direction.

Thereby, when the digital reproducing device 4 is dangled from user's neck, the user holds only the circumferential side plane of the housing case 10 with hands, and the user's thumb easily touches the play/stop button 19 for manipulation.

In this connection, in the digital reproducing device 4, as

it is apparent from Fig. 5, guides 32A and 32B for passing and holding the headphone code 28 are provided on the dangling strap 31, which prevents the headphone code 28 from being twisted together when the digital reproducing device 4 is used with the dangling strap 31 dangled from user's neck.

Further, in the digital reproducing device 4, as shown in Fig. 7, the jack holding part 25 is formed in a wedge shape, and the headphone jack 24 is held in the jack holding part 25 in which the axis of the cylindrical plug inserting opening is inclined with respect to the longitudinal direction of the case.

Therefore, in the digital reproducing device 4, a plug 29 can be inserted into the headphone jack 24 from the inclined direction with respect to the longitudinal direction of the case. Thereby, the connection part between the plug 29 and the headphone code 28 is relatively distanced from the play/stop button 19, which prevents the connection part between the plug 29 and the headphone code 28 from obstructing the manipulation of the play/stop button 19.

In addition to this, in the digital reproducing device 4, as shown in Fig. 8, one end side of the platy clip part 26 is supported by a supporting axis (not shown) provided into the jack holding part 25, and the other end side of the clip 26 is moved within a predetermined angle with respect to the back plane of the housing case 10.

Thereby, the digital reproducing device 4 can be attached to

the breast pocket by sandwiching a breast pocket 33 between the back plane and the housing case 10 and the other end side of the clip part 26.

Then, also in the case that the digital reproducing device 4 is attached to the breast pocket 33, the play/stop button 19 is still out of the breast pocket 33. Thereby, this can prevent that the operability of the play/stop button 19 becomes difficult.

Here, as shown in Fig. 9, the housing case 10 is composed of a front side case 35 for covering the whole front side, from one end to the other end, a back side case 36 for covering one end side of the back plane, the cover part 23 for covering the other end side of the back plane, and a button holding part 37 for holding the play/stop button 19.

The front side case 35, the back side case 36, the cover part 23, and the button holding part 37 are made of synthetic resin which include PC (Polycarbonate) resin and ABS (Acrylonitrile Butadiene Styrene) resin at a predetermined ratio.

Then, the front side case 35 forms the dry battery containing part 22 described above in Fig. 4(D) at the other end side with the single member. Also, in the containing space between one end side of the front side case 35 and the back side case 36 are a display protecting member 40, a display 41, a sub circuit board 42, a main circuit board 43, and a switch circuit board 44 are laminated and contained in order. In this connection, the switch circuit board 44 is a flexible board on which switch

circuit elements 44A and 44B for the maximum volume fixing switch 12, and the hold switch 20 are mounted, and is fixed in the back side case 36.

Practically, as shown in Figs. 10(A) and 10(B), the dry battery containing part 22 has cylindrical containing space having the inside diameter which fits the outside diameter of the dry battery for driving 21. At one end in the longitudinal direction of the case, a negative electrode terminal 45 formed like a coil by a conductive wire is arranged. At the other end in the longitudinal direction of the case, a positive electrode terminal 46 formed like a disc by a conductive wire is arranged.

In this case, in the dry battery containing part 22, one end of the negative electrode terminal 45 is directly and electrically connected to the main circuit board 43, and the positive electrode terminal 46 is electrically connected to the main circuit board 43 with a disc-type conducting board 47 which is integrated with the positive electrode terminal 46.

Then, at the bottom of the dry battery containing part 22, a groove part 22A is formed through one end to the other end in the longitudinal direction of the case, and the conducting board 47 is fitted into the groove part 22A. The depth of the groove part 22A is selected in accordance with the thickness of the conducting board 47, about 0.2 [mm]. Thereby, the conducting board 47 is prevented from being projected from the internal plane of the dry battery containing part 22 into the containing space.

Further, at the bottom of the dry battery containing part 22, a sheet-type serial label 48 having a thickness of about 0.1 [mm] is adhered over the conducting board 47, from one end through the other end in the longitudinal direction of the case.

The serial label 48, as shown in Figs. 11(A) and 11(B), is formed by successively laminating an acrylic pressure-sensitive adhesive layer 49 having a relatively strong adhesive power, an aluminum layer 50, an insulative resin layer for printing 51 made of PET (Polyethylene terephthalate), and a transparent film 52. The thickness of the aluminum layer 50 is suitably selected, so that the serial label 48 has a certain extent of hardness. Thereby, the serial label 48 can be prevented from damage such as break.

In this connection, in the serial label 48, pictures 53 showing the loading direction of the dry battery for driving 21, characters 54 showing the manufacturer's serial number of each digital reproducing device 4 on which the serial label 47 is adhered, and a two-dimensional bar code 55 are printed on the resin layer for printing 51. The transparent film 52 is laminated over the resin layer for printing 51 to protect the picture 53 and the characters 54.

Therefore, in the dry battery containing part 22 (Figs. 10(A) and 10(B)), the strong adhesive power and hardness of the serial label 48 safeguards not to lift the conducting board 47 from the groove part 22A to damage the circumferential plane of the dry battery for driving 21. Simultaneously, the insulation of

converting circuit and an amplifier are mounted on one plane of the sub circuit board 42. And a plurality of LEDs (Light Emitting Diode) 70A to 70C for backup light are also mounted, corresponding to the light conducting plate 64.

Further, on one plane of the sub circuit board 42, a plurality of lands for LCD 71 having a conductor pattern, which corresponds to respective electrodes of the LCD 63 are formed. When it is contained in the housing case 10, the lands for LCD 71 are electrically connected to the respectively corresponding electrodes of the LCD 63 with respective wires of the anisotropic conducting member 65.

Further, as shown in Fig. 14(B), surface-mounted electronic parts such as an IC package 72I constituting the EEPROM (Electrically Erasable Programmable Read-Only Memory) are mounted on the other plane of the sub circuit board 42. For example, among a pair of connectors for directly connecting the circuit boards to each other (hereinafter, referred to as boards connector), a male-type boards connector 73 is mounted on a predetermined place.

In this connection, on the other plane of the sub circuit board 42, lands for switch 74A and 74B which are electrically connected to respective switch elements 57 to 61, which are provided on the display protecting member 40, with a flexible board (not shown) are provided in a form of the conductor pattern, and a land for circuit board 75 which is electrically connected to the switch circuit board 44 is also formed.

As shown in Fig. 15(A), the main circuit board 43 is rectangular with the short side (that is, the width) of about 17.2 [mm] and the long side of about 62 [mm]. Surface-mounted electronic parts such as an IC package 77I constituting the flash memory controller, an IC package 78I constituting the CPU (Central Processing Unit), and an IC package 79I constituting the USB controller are mounted on one plane. And a female-type connector 80 for connecting boards is mounted at a predetermined place so as to fit the male-type boards connector 73 (Fig. 14(B)).

Further, as shown in Fig. 15(B), on the other plane of the main circuit board 43, surface-mounted electronic parts such as an IC package 81I constituting the semiconductor flash memory, an IC package 82I constituting a DSP (Display Signal Processor), an USB connector 83, and circuit elements 84 constituting power source circuits are mounted. In this connection, a negative electrode terminal 45 and the conducting plate 47 of the dry battery containing part 22 are electrically connected to the circuit elements 84 constituting the power source circuits.

Then, as shown in Figs. 16(A) and 16(B), in the main circuit board 43 and the sub circuit board 42 which are positioned in parallel to each other, the male-type boards connector 73 is inserted into the female-type boards connector 80 to mechanically and electrically connect them directly.

In this connection, a bus is provided in a form of a conductor pattern, and digital surface-mounted electronic parts

connected to the bus are mounted on the main circuit board 43, and on the sub circuit board 42, analog surface-mounted electronic parts are mounted. Thereby, the surface-mounted electronic parts of the sub circuit board 42 is not influenced by noises occurred by the performance of the surface-mounted electronic parts of the main circuit board 43.

Further, the surface-mounted electronic parts on one plane of the main circuit board 43 do not face the surface-mounted electronic parts on the other facing plane of the sub circuit board 42 each other. Thereby, when they are connected with the boards connectors 80 and 73, the thickness between the main circuit board 43 and the sub circuit board 42 can be brought close to the thickness of the surface-mounted electronic parts.

By the way, on the main circuit board 43 (Fig. 15(A)), as well as the surface-mounted electronic parts, the female-type boards connector 80 is positioned with solder, thereafter, is fixed by the reflow firehole which melts the solder. So, when the solder melts, the boards connector 80 may be fixed in the state that it rotates on one plane of the main circuit board 43, due to an error of the amount of solder applied on one plane or an error of the positioning of the boards connector 80.

Similarly, on the other plane of the sub circuit board 42 (Fig. 15(B)), as well as the surface-mounted electronic parts, the male-type boards connector 73 is positioned with solder, thereafter, is fixed by a reflow firehole which melts the solder.

Therefore, when the solder melts, the boards connector 73 may be fixed in the state that it rotates on the other plane of the sub circuit board 42, due to an error of the amount of solder applied on the other plane or an error of the positioning of the boards connector 73.

On this account, the sub circuit board 42 (Fig. 16(B)) may be connected to the main circuit board 43 in a state that the sub circuit board 42 rotates by 5 degrees at maximum in parallel to the main circuit board 43 with the mounting position of the boards connector 73 being centered.

Then, on one plane of the main circuit board 43, the boards connector 80 is mounted at a predetermined position of the other end side. Also, on the other plane of the sub circuit board 42, the connector for connecting boards 73 is mounted at a predetermined position of the other end side. Thereby, when the sub circuit board 42 is connected to the main circuit board 43 in a state of rotating in parallel to one plane of the main circuit board 43, rocking amount in the longitudinal direction of the main circuit board 43 becomes largest at one end side of the sub circuit board 42.

However, the sub circuit board 42 is formed with a trapezoid shape in which the width of one end is smaller than that of the other end, so as to be connected to the main circuit board 43 within the angle at which the both side planes of the sub circuit board 42 are in parallel to the corresponding both side planes of

with the rotation angle with respect to the main circuit board 43, so that the sub circuit board 42 is regulated not to move in the longitudinal direction of the case.

Further, in the sub circuit board 42 (Fig. 14(A)), the land for LCD 71 is formed with a predetermined length along the width direction of the sub circuit board 42. Thereby, if the sub circuit board 42 is contained in a state of rotating in parallel to the main circuit board 43, the wire of the anisotropic conducting member 65 can be electrically connected to the land for LCD 71 certainly.

By the way, the housing case 10 is formed according to the criteria of cylindrical shape having an outside diameter of about 17 [mm]. However, the IC package 77I constituting the flash memory controller and the IC package 78I constituting the CPU are respectively formed into a square shape having a side of about 16 [mm], so that the main circuit board 43 (Figs. 15(A) and 15(B)) is formed into a rectangular shape having a width of about 17.2 [mm] accordingly.

Thus, as shown in Fig. 22, at the joining part between the front side case 35 and the back side case 36, L-shaped ribs 35A, 35B, 36A, and 36B are so provided as to project outside along the longitudinal direction of the case.

And, to the front side case 35, fitting parts 36AX and 36BX which are nearly in parallel to the right and left side planes in the corresponding ribs 36A and 36B of the back side case 36 are

fitted into fitting parts 35AX and 35BX which are nearly in parallel to the right and left side planes in the ribs 35A and 35B.

Thereby, in the housing case 10, the main circuit board 43 is contained between the internal of the convex projection part composed of the fitted ribs 35A and 36A and the internal of the convex projection part composed of the other ribs 35B and 36B, so that the main circuit board 43 can be easily contained together with the display protecting member 40, the display 41, the sub circuit board 42, and the switch circuit board 44, without spoiling the cylindrical shape of the housing case 10.

Further, in the housing case 10, the fitting parts 35AX, 35BX, 36AX, and 36BX of the corresponding ribs 35A, 35B, 36A, and 36B of the front side case 35 and the back side case 36 are fitted, so that the ribs 35A and 35B, and 36A and 36B are integrated one another to improve the rigidity of the housing case 10.

By the way, on the other plane (Fig. 15(B)) of the main circuit board 43, a conducting pattern for grounding (hereinafter, referred to as ground pattern) 92 is formed at both end parts in the width direction from one end to the other end in the longitudinal direction, and the ground pattern 92 at both end parts are arranged close to a pair of corresponding ribs 35A and 36A, and 35B and 36B.

Thereby, as shown in Fig. 23, when the housing case 10 is brought close to the charged metal member, etc., even if static electricity has entered from outside to inside through gaps

between the ribs 35A, 36A, 35B, and 36B, the static electricity is first to be brought in by the comparatively large ground pattern 92 at both end parts of the main circuit board 43, so as to prevent the internal surface-mounted electronic parts from being damaged by high-voltage static electricity.

Further, the display protecting member 40 (Fig. 12) is made of conductive metal plate as described above, and the projection parts 40K and 40L are provided at one end side and the other end side of both leg parts 40I and 40J.

In addition to this, on one plane of the sub circuit board 42 (Fig. 14(A)), a ground pattern 94 is formed at both end parts in the width direction, correspondingly to the projection parts 40K and 40L of the display protecting member 40.

Then, as shown in Figs. 24 and 25, when the display protecting member 40 is contained in the housing case 10, it is positioned by the positioning pin 86 in the front side case 35, and the sub circuit board 42 is contained with few movement in the longitudinal direction of the case. Thereby, the projection parts 40K and 40L provided in the leg parts 40I and 40J are electrically connected to the corresponding ground pattern 94 of the sub circuit board 42.

Thus, when the housing case 10 is become close to the charged metal member, etc., even if static electricity is entered from outside to inside through a gap 95A between the front side case 35 and the display window 11 or gaps 95B between the volume

up button 14, the volume down button 15, the forwarding button 16, the rewinding button 17, and the shift button 18 and the hole part provided in the front side case 35 for holding these buttons, the static electricity are taken into the display protecting member 40 which is close to these gaps and are brought into the ground pattern 94 of the sub circuit board 42, so as to prevent the LCD 63 and the switch elements 57 to 61 from being damaged by high-voltage static electricity.

In addition to this, the display protecting member 40 is supported by the sub circuit board 42, and is made of metal plate, so that when the switch elements 57 to 61 provided on the flat part 40A are pressed through the corresponding shift button 18, volume down button 15, volume up button 14, rewinding button 17, and forwarding button 16, it has rigidity enough to sustain the pressure without deformation. Thereby, a gap between the inner side plane of the front side case 35 and the flat part 40A can be used effectively as containing space for the switch elements 57 to 61.

Further, the display protecting member 40 is made of metal plate as described above. Thereby, if it is selected to relatively thin in its thickness, the display protecting member 40 can ensure the rigidity enough to sustain the pressure of the switch elements 57 to 61. Therefore, containing space used exclusively by the display protecting member 40 in the housing case 10 can be reduced remarkably.

(2-2) The circuit constitution of the digital reproducing device

Next, the circuit constitution of the digital reproducing device 4 will be explained with reference to Fig. 26. The digital reproducing device 4 converts the power source voltage which is supplied from the dry battery for driving 21, into the inner electric power of a predetermined voltage at a power source circuit 102 to supply it to the CPU 78 and respective circuit blocks, so as to drive the whole device.

When the digital reproducing device 4 is connected to the computer device 3 with the USB cable 103 via the USB connector 83, the digital music contents C1 bulk-transferred from the computer device 3 is supplied by the USB controller 79 to the CPU 78 through an internal bus 104.

Here, the digital music contents C1 is 64 [byte] per a packet as the frame form, and is transferred from the computer device 3 at a transfer rate, 12 [Mbit/sec].

The digital music contents C1 is composed of the header H1 and the music data D1 as shown in Fig. 27. In the header H1 stores "file ID", "header size", "contents key (for encryption)", "file size", "codec ID", "file name", and "file information" are stored, and "reproduction limitation data", "reproduction starting date", "reproduction finishing date", "reproducible number of times", and "real reproduced number of times" are stored as reproduction limitation information necessary to perform a reproduction limitation processing.

Practically, as shown in Fig. 28 in which the stored information is expressed by hexadecimal digit, "header size" represents the data size of the header H1 (33 bytes in this case) and "file size" represents the data size of the file of the music data D1 (33636138 bytes in this case).

Further, "contents key" is cipher data for deciphering the code of the music data D1 (Fig. 27). When the digital music contents C1 is given and received between the computer device 3 and the digital reproducing device 4 practically, it is further enciphered by a common session key and is transferred.

Practically, when the computer device 3 and the digital reproducing device 4 are connected to each other, the digital reproducing device 4 is needed to be certified by the computer device 3. In this case, the certification is performed with a challenge response method between the computer device 3 and the digital reproducing device 4. In this connection, in the digital reproducing device 4, the DSP 82 performs the deciphering processing in certification by the challenge response method.

Here, the challenge response method is a method that the digital reproducing device 4 makes a response to an value (challenge) generated by the computer device 3, with a value (response) generated by using a secret key which is commonly used between the digital reproducing device 4 and the computer device 3. Since the challenge changes every time, there is no risk that the response is reused if it has been bugged, so as to securely

date" are data representing the range of the reproducible term, when the "reproduction limitation data" is "2", and the data of "00040F" and "00070F" represents that the reproducible term is between "April 15, 2000" and "July 15, 2000".

Similarly, "reproducible number of times" and "real reproduced number of times" are, when "reproduction limitation data" is "1" and "2", data representing the reproducible maximum number of times which has been previously prescribed and the real number of times of reproduction which is renewed by the CPU 78 when the reproduction processing is executed. The data of "02" and "01" represents that "reproducible number of times" is "two" times and "real reproduced number of times" is "one" time at the present moment.

Thereby, according to the reproduction limitation information of the header H1, as described in Fig. 2, the digital reproducing device 4 can repeatedly execute the reproduction processing twice for each processing again and again, between "April 15, 2000" and "July 15, 2000".

In this connection, as shown in Fig. 29, in the header H1 of the digital music contents C1 with only the reproducible number of time as reproduction limitation, "reproduction limitation data" shows "1", "reproduction starting date" and "reproduction finishing date" show "000000" and "000000", and "reproducible number of times" and "real reproduced number of times" show "0a" and "05". More specifically, this shows that there is no

by the CPU 78 and are transferred to the RAM (not shown) of the DSP 82.

The DSP 82 detects errors in the music data D1 of the digital music contents C1 by a CRC (Cyclic Redundancy Check) method on the basis of the reproduction code transferred from the semiconductor flash memory 80, and then extends and reproduces it. The reproduced data is supplied to a digital-to-analog converting circuit 108.

Here, the DSP 82 is an IC package 82I (Fig. 15(B)) integratedly constructed with an oscillating circuit (not shown) provided internally. The DSP 82 reproduces the music data D1 on the basis of a master clock MCLK from an oscillator 82A being an external crystal, and sends operation clocks comprising the master clock MCLK, a bit clock BCLK having a predetermined frequency generated at the internal oscillating circuit on the basis of the master clock MCLK, a L-channel clock LCLK in a frame, and a R-channel clock RCLK, to the digital-to-analog converting circuit 108.

In this case, the DSP 82 sends the above-mentioned operation clocks to the digital-to-analog converting circuit 108 in accordance with the reproduction code while the music data D1 is reproduced. However, the DSP 82 halts the supplying of the operation clocks not to operate the digital-to-analog converting circuit 108 in accordance with the reproduction code while the music data D1 is not reproduced. Thereby, the power consumption of

the whole digital reproducing device 4 can be reduced.

Similarly, to the CPU 78 and the USB controller 79, the oscillators 78A and 79A made of crystal are externally attached. The master clock MCLK supplied from the oscillators 78A and 79A is used to execute predetermined processing.

Thus, in the digital reproducing device 4, a clock generating module for supplying a clock to respective circuit blocks such as the CPU 78, the DSP 82, and the USB controller 79 is unnecessary. Therefore, the circuit constitution can be simplified and downsized.

The digital-to-analog converting circuit 108 converts the reproduced music data D1 into an analog audio signal, which is sent to an amplifier 109. The amplifier 109 amplifies the audio signal to a predetermined level, and then outputs it from the headphone jack 24 to the headphone 5, so that the music reproduced via the headphone 5 is given to users.

In this way, the digital reproducing device 4, when the play/stop button 19 is pressed, reproduces the music data D1 of the digital music contents C1 stored in the semiconductor flash memory 80 under the control of the CPU 78, and when the play/stop button 19 is pressed during reproduction, stops the reproduction.

Further, the digital reproducing device 4, when the play/stop button 19 is pressed again after the reproduction is stopped, resumes the reproduction of the music data D1 at the stop position under the control of the CPU 78. When no manipulation is

stored in the semiconductor flash memory 80, when the digital music contents C1 of the first track is written under the control of the CPU 78 for example, the block position of the first track in the digital music contents C1 is written as a FAT. When the digital music contents C1 of the second track is written, the block position of the first track in the digital music contents C1 and the block position of the second track in the digital music contents C1 are rewritten as a new FAT in the same area again.

In this way, since the FAT is rewritten whenever the digital music contents C1 is written in the semiconductor flash memory 80, the CPU 78 reads out the FAT so as to recognize the block position which is a place for storing the desired digital music contents C1.

Besides, in the FAT, the same data is doubly written for reserve, so that the data is protected by the FAT for reserve even if the dry battery for driving 21 is removed in writing the FAT.

However, although in the semiconductor flash memory 80, the stored digital music contents C1 is rewritten freely by the computer device 3, it is prescribed in the rewriting number of times in the present circumstances.

On this account, in the case that the FAT is stored in the semiconductor flash memory 80, the FAT is rewritten whenever the digital music contents C1 is stored, and the FAT is rewritten doubly, so that the rewriting number of times of the FAT is increased overly and the rewriting number of times of the digital music contents C1 is consumed.

More specifically, if the CPU 78 stores the FAT in the semiconductor flash memory 80, the rewriting number of times of the FAT increases and the rewriting number of times of the digital music contents C1 is decreased, and as a result, the prescribed rewriting number of times is not satisfied.

On the contrary, the EEPROM 72 is exclusively provided for storing the FAT. Whenever the CPU 78 stores the digital music contents C1 in the semiconductor flash memory 80, the CPU 78 may additionally store the FAT of the stored digital music contents C1 in the EEPROM 72, and it is unnecessary to rewrite whenever the digital music contents C1 is stored.

In this way, the CPU 78 does not store the FAT which is rewritten many times in the semiconductor flash memory 80, together with the digital music contents C1, but writes the FAT in the EEPROM 72 separately from the digital music contents C1, so that the prescribed number of times of rewriting in the semiconductor flash memory 80 can be effectively all used for rewriting the digital music contents C1.

Practically, the CPU 78 stores the digital music contents C1 in the semiconductor flash memory 80 and writes the FAT which is rewritten many times, in the EEPROM 72, so that the number of times of rewriting the digital music contents C1 in the semiconductor flash memory 80 can be increased several ten times or more, compared with the case where the FAT and the digital music contents C1 are stored together in the semiconductor flash

memory 80.

Further, the CPU 78 additionally writes the FAT in the EEPROM 72, so that the number of times of rewriting the FAT is reduced the most to prevent the EEPROM 72 from being unrewritable in a short period.

By the way, the digital reproducing device 4, when it is connected to the computer device 3 with the USB cable 103 (hereinafter, referred to as USB-connection), recognizes based on the interruption signal supplied from the USB controller 79 to the CPU 78, that it is USB-connected.

Then, when the digital reproducing device 4 recognizes that it is USB-connected, it receives the supply of the utility power of a prescribed electric current value from the computer device 3 through the USB cable 103, and at the same time, controls the power source circuit 102 to stop the supply of the internal power performed by the dry battery for driving 21.

At this time, the CPU 78 receives the supply of the utility power from the computer device 3 through the USB cable 103, and at the same time, stops the reproduction processing of the music data D1 performed by the DSP 82. Thereby, the CPU 78 prevents that the utility power supplied from the computer device 3 exceeds a prescribed electrical current value, and controls to constantly receive the utility power of a prescribed current power value.

In this way, when the CPU 78 is USB-connected, it switches from the internal power supplied from the dry battery for driving

21 to the utility power supplied from the computer device 3. Thereby, the low-cost utility power from the computer device 3 is used to reduce the power consumption of the high-cost dry battery for driving 21, so that the duration of life of the dry battery for driving 21 can be lengthen.

In addition, when the CPU 78 receives the supply of the utility power from the computer device 3 through the USB cable 103, it stops the reproduction processing of the music data D1 by the DSP 82, so as to reduce a radiation generated by the DSP's 82 operation. As a result, the whole radiation including the computer device 3 can be reduced remarkably.

Further, when the CPU 78 switches power from the internal power supplied from the dry battery for driving 21 to the utility power supplied from the computer device 3, it stops the reproduction processing of the music data D1 performed by the DSP 82, and writes the digital music contents C1 in the semiconductor flash memory 80 under the control of the computer device 3, without executing various operations in accordance with the manipulation of various buttons (the maximum volume fixing switch 12, the hold switch 20, the volume up button 14, the volume down button 15, the play/stop button 19, the forwarding button 16, the rewinding button 17, and so on). Thereby, even if the various operation buttons are pressed while the digital music contents C1 is rewritten, the operation of the device itself can be surely prevented from being unstable, and the digital music contents C1

can be protected.

Simultaneously, the CPU 78 switches power from the internal power supplied from the dry battery for driving 21 to the utility power supplied from the computer device 3, so as to surely receive the supply of the utility power from the computer device 3 at all times.

Thereby, even if the dry battery for driving 21 is removed and the battery is run down while the digital music contents C1 is written in the semiconductor flash memory 80 under the control of the computer device 3, the digital reproducing device 4 avoids that the processing stops, and surely executes the data writing processing.

At this time, the CPU 78 controls the LCD controller 68 on the basis of the utility power supplied from the computer device 3 to display "PC" on the display 41, which informs the user of what it is connected to the computer device 3 at present and can not operate with the various buttons and switches.

(3) Operations and effects according to this embodiment

In the above construction, in the digital reproducing device 4, in the housing case 10 for containing the dry battery for driving 21 as well as the various circuit boards including the main circuit board 43 and the sub circuit board 42, the strap fitting 27 is provided at a predetermined position which is a little close to one end side from the center of gravity positioned at the nearly center part of the housing case 10, and the

digital reproducing device 4 which can improve the manipulation remarkably can be realized.

Further, in the foregoing construction, in this digital reproducing device 4, the ribs 35A and 35B, and 36A and 36B are provided in the longitudinal direction, at the joining parts of the front side case 35 and the back side case 36 constituting the housing case which is almost cylindrical in accordance with the outside diameter of the dry battery for driving 21.

And in the digital reproducing device 4, the front side case 35 is attached to the back side case 36 by fitting the fitting parts 35AX and 36AX, and 35BX and 36BX, in the ribs 35A and 35B, and 36A and 36B and the projecting parts are formed on the right side plane and the left side plane of the housing case 10, to contain the ends of the main circuit board 43 which projects from internal space of the cylindrical-shaped housing case 10, integrally with the internal space.

Therefore, in the digital reproducing device 4, though the main circuit board 43 is wider than the outside diameter of the cylindrical-shaped housing case 10, the main circuit board 43 can be easily contained between one end of the projecting part and the other end of projecting part, without spoiling the almost cylindrical form of the housing case 10. Thus, it is avoided that the whole housing case is enlarged due to the main circuit board 43.

Further, in the digital reproducing device 4, the ribs 35A

and 35B, and 36A and 36B are formed on the front side case 35 and the back side case 36, which can improve the rigidity of the front side case and the back side case 36.

In addition to this, in the digital reproducing device 4, the front side case 35 and the back side case 36 are attached to each other, by fitting the fitting parts 35AX and 35BX, and 36AX and 36BX in the ribs 35A and 35B, and 36A and 36B. Thereby the ribs 35A and 35B, and 36A and 36B are integrally fitted. Therefore, the fitting parts 35AX and 35BX, and 36AX and 36BX can form the projecting ribs each having a double structure, in the longitudinal direction of the case, facing each other, thus the rigidity of the housing case 10 can be also improved.

As a result, in the digital reproducing device 4, since the rigidity of the housing case 10 is improved, the housing case 10 can be made thinner, thus the housing case 10 can be further downsized.

By the way, as shown in Fig. 31, in the case where a housing case 150 for containing the dry battery for driving 21 with the outside diameter of about 14.5 [mm] and the main circuit board 43 with the width of 17.2 [mm], is formed depending on the width of the main circuit board 43, its outside diameter is about 19.2 [mm] even assuming that the thickness of the housing case 150 is 1 [mm].

On the other hand, as apparent from Fig. 32, in the digital reproducing device 4 in this embodiment, the housing case 10 is formed depending on the outside diameter of the dry battery for

driving 21, the outside diameter of the housing case 10 can be selected to be about 17 [mm], even taking the protection of the thickness of the housing case 10 from damage and clearance between the dry battery for driving 21 and the housing case into consideration.

And, in the digital reproducing device 4, when projecting parts with the width of about 4.5 [mm] are formed in the housing case 10 by the ribs 35A and 35B, and 36A and 36B, the main circuit board 43 can be easily contained inside, which can remarkably downsize the housing case 10, as compared with the housing case 150 which is formed in a cylindrical shape depending on the width of the main circuit board 43.

In this connection, in the digital reproducing device 4, for example, when the facing projecting parts of the housing case 10 is colored in blue, and the cylindrical part of the housing case 10 is colored in gold brighter than the projecting parts, the cylindrical part is emphasized and the downsizing of the whole device is visibly emphasized.

According to forgoing constitution, the projecting parts having containing space are provided depending on the ends of the main circuit board 4 in the width direction, facing each other, in the longitudinal direction of the case on the circumferential plane of the cylindrical housing case 10, and the main circuit board 43 is contained between the inside of one projecting part and the inside of the other projecting part. Therefore, the main

circuit board 43 which is wider than the outside diameter of the cylindrical case can be easily contained, thus making it possible to further downsize the digital reproducing device.

(4) Other embodiments

The embodiment described above has dealt with the case where the strap fitting 27 is provided at the adjacent part between the jack holding part 25 and the clip part 26 and at a predetermined position shifted from the center of gravity of the digital reproducing device 4, on one end side of the housing case 10. However, the present invention is not only limited to this but also the strap fitting 27 can be provided at another different position, if provided at a position which is a little close to one end side or the other end side from the center of gravity of the housing case 10 containing the various circuit boards and the dry battery for driving 21. In this case, the posture of the dangled housing case 10 also can be kept.

Further, the embodiment described above has dealt with the case where the play/stop button 19 is provided on one plane of the housing case 10. However, the present invention is not only limited to this but also the play/stop button 19 can be provided on the circumference plane of one end side of the housing case 10. In this case, the manipulation of the play/stop button 19 can be also improved.

Furthermore, the embodiment described above has dealt with the case where the above-described plug 29 shown in Fig. 7 is

inserted into the headphone jack 24. However, the present invention is not only limited to this but also a L-shaped plug can be inserted into the headphone jack 24. Inserting this plug into the headphone jack 24 can surely prevent the degradation in the manipulation of the play/stop button 19. If the L-shaped plug is the one to be inserted into the headphone jack 24, the headphone jack 24 can be provided in the housing case 10 in such a way that the axis of the plug inserting hole is approximately in parallel to the longitudinal direction of the case. In this case, the plug is formed like L-shape, so that the manipulation of the play/stop button 19 can be prevented from being degraded.

Furthermore, the embodiment described above has dealt with the case where the convex projecting parts are provided on the right and left sides of the housing case 10 with the robs 35A and 35B, and 36A and 36B. However, the present invention is not limited to this but also various shaped projecting parts can be provided, such as mountain-shaped projecting parts and projecting parts with waterdrop sections which are integrally formed in the housing case, as long as the main circuit board 43 can be contained.

Further, the embodiment described above has dealt with the case where the projecting parts are provided on the right and left sides of the housing case. However, the present invention is not limited to this and but also a projecting part can be provided on only one predetermined side of the housing case 10 and two or more

means.

Furthermore, the embodiment described above has dealt with the case where the circular strap fitting 27 is provided on one end side in the longitudinal direction of the case as a strap attaching means for attaching a predetermined strap thereto. However, the present invention is not only limited to this but also other various kinds of attaching means can be widely used, as long as it is provided on one end side in the longitudinal direction of the case and can allow a predetermined strap to be attached to.

Furthermore, the embodiment described above has dealt with the case where the band-type dangling strap 31 described above in Fig. 5 is used as a strap. However, the present invention is not only limited to this but also other various straps, such as a strap extremely shorter than the dangling strap 31 and a chain strap made of metal, can be widely used. Therefore, the device can be used not only by dangling from user's neck but also by dangling from waist-belt or breast pocket.

Further, the embodiment described above has dealt with the case where the headphone jack 24 is applied as a jack having a terminal, which is provided on one end side in the longitudinal direction of the case for inserting the external connection plug therein and outputting analog signals obtained from the digital-to-analog converting means, to the inserted connection plug. However, the present invention is not limited to this and other

various kinds of jack can be used, such as a plug provided in an earphone cord and a plug provided in a code for inputting and outputting predetermined data, as long as it has a terminal which is provided on one end side in the longitudinal direction of the case for inserting an external plug therein and outputting analog signals obtained from the digital-to-analog converting means to the inserted connection plug.

Furthermore, the embodiment described above has dealt with the case where the rectangular main circuit board 43 described in Fig. 15(A) and 15(B) is used as a circuit board which is contained in the housing case with loading an Integrated Circuit package consisting at least a part of the control means. However, the present invention is not limited to this and circuit boards having other various forms can be widely used, such as a disc circuit board and a trapezoid circuit board like the sub circuit board 42.

Furthermore, the embodiment described above has dealt with the case where the projecting parts composed of the ribs 35A and 35B, and 36A and 36B fitted to each other are applied as projecting parts, which are projected from parts of the housing case in accordance with the form of the circuit board for containing a part of the circuit board. However, the present invention is not limited to this and projecting parts having other various forms and structures can be widely applied, as long as they are projected from parts of the housing case in accordance with the form of the circuit board for containing a part of the

holder 265, the digital reproducing device 4 can be easily separated from the strap 31, by releasing the connection at the connecting part 261 with just one push, without releasing the string 264 from the strap fitting 27.

In addition, as shown in Fig. 35, in the strap 31, a nylon sticking tape (that is, a magic tape) 270 is attached on one end of the back plane of the band 260A and a sticking tape 271 of the approximately same shape and size as the sticking tape 270 is attached on the other end of the front plane of the band 260A.

In the strap 31, the sticking tape 270, which is attached on one end of the back plane of the band 260A, and the sticking tape 271, which is attached on the other end of the front plane of the band 260A, are stuck to each other, thereby the band 260A are not twisted in front of a breast when dangling the strap from the user's neck, and the strap 31 the plane of the band 260A always faces outside. Therefore, designs and logos written on the surface of the band 260A are not hidden and the strap 31 looks much nicer.

In addition, in the strap 31, since one end and the other end of the band 260A are just stuck to each other with the sticking tapes 270 and 271, they can be easy disconnected by apply little power. Therefore, even if the band 260A are pulled in a certain accident, the sticking tapes 270 and 271 are immediately separated from each other, so that the strap 31 does not strangle the user's neck.

Further, in the strap 31 (Fig. 33), guiding holes 32A and

of the headphone 5 with the band 260A.

Therefore, when the strap 31 is dangled from the user's neck by tying the string 264 of the holder 265 to the strap fitting 27 of the digital reproducing device 4, the headphone code 28 of the headphone 5 connected to the digital reproducing device 4 can be surely prevented from becoming tangled with the band 260A, thus its usability can be improved.

In addition, in the strap 31, since the headphone code 28 of the headphone 5 is positioned on the back plane of the band 260A, only front surface of the band 260A having designs and logos written thereon are visible, thus it becomes more fashionable and also looks much nicer.

Further, in the strap 31, since the sticking tape 270 attached to one end of the back plane of the band 260A are stuck to the sticking tape 271 attached to the other end of the front plane of the band 260A, the band 260A are not twisted in front of a breast. Therefore, the band 260A does not make the user feel uncomfortable, when the digital reproducing device 4 is dangled from his neck.

According to the foregoing constitution, the guiding holes 32A and 32B are provided on the back plane of the band 260A in the strap 31, and the headphone code 28 of the headphone 5 is passed through the guiding holes 32A and 32B, the head phone code 28 of the headphone 5 are integrated with the band 260A, and the headphone code 28 can be surely prevented from becoming tangled

with the band 260A, thus its usability can be remarkably improved and the user smartly uses them.

Next, a dangling strap in other embodiments will be described. In Fig. 37 in which the same reference numerals are applied to parts corresponding to Fig. 5, referent numeral 280 shows the digital reproducing device 4 to which a dangling strap 281 is attached, as a whole, in another embodiment. The headphone 5 is connected to the digital reproducing device 4 with the headphone code 28.

Similarly to the strap 31 described in Fig. 33, the dangling strap 281, as shown in Fig. 38, is a soft cloth band 282 of a predetermined width, its length is selected so that the digital reproducing device 4 (not shown) is placed in front of a breast when the device 4 is dangled from the user's neck.

To this strap 281, a connecting part 283 is attached to connect one tip of the band 282 to the digital reproducing device 4. A hook 285 which can rotate with the axis of the holding part 284 as a center and also can rotate in the direction showed by the arrow is attached to this connecting part 283, and the ring 286 is attached to the hook 285.

The ring 286 has a spring constitution, is formed so as to be divided at a predetermined cut position 287 by applying external power to separate this part from each other, and can be connected to the strap fitting 27 of the digital reproducing device 4.

Therefore, the digital reproducing device 4 can be dangled using the ring 286 of the strap 281, and the connecting part 283 can be immediately separated from the digital reproducing device.

In addition, similarly to the strap 31 described in the aforementioned embodiment, the sticking tape 288 is attached on one end of the back plane of the band 282 and the sticking tape 289 of the approximately same shape and same size as the sticking tape 288, is attached to the other end of the face plane of the band 282.

Therefore, in the strap 281, when the sticking tapes 288 and 289 are stuck to each other, the band 282 is not twisted, and the front surface of the band 282 always faces outside. Therefore, designs and logos written on the front surface of the band 282 is not hidden and the strap 281 looks much nicer.

In this case, also, since one end and the other end of the band 282 are just stuck to each other with the sticking tapes 288 and 289, they can be disconnected by apply little power so as to separate them. Therefore, when the band 282 is pulled in a certain accident, the sticking tapes 288 and 289 are separated from each other, so that the strap 281 does not strangle the user's neck.

In addition, similarly to the strap 31 in the aforementioned embodiments, in the strap 281, the guiding holes 32A and 32B are provided to pass the headphone code 28 of the headphone 5 connected to the digital reproducing device 4 through, on the back plane of the band 282.

Therefore, after passing the headphone code 28 of the headphone 5 through the guiding holes 32A and 32B, the sticking tape 288, which is attached to one end of the back plane of the band 282, is stuck to the sticking tape 289, which is stuck on the other end of the front plane of the band 282. Therefore a ring for dangling from the user's neck is formed and the headphone code 28 of the headphone 5 is integrated with the band 282.

In the foregoing constitution, in the strap 281, the guiding holes 32A and 32B are provided on the back plane of the band 282, and the headphone code 28 of the headphone 5 is passed through the guiding holes 32A and 32B, thereby the headphone code 28 of the headphone 5 can be integrated with the band 282.

In this case, in the strap 281, only the digital reproducing device 4 can be separated from the strap 281 itself, different from the strap 31 in the first embodiment where the digital reproducing device 4 is separated together with the male-type part 263 of the connecting part 261.

reproducing device 4 can be prevented from becoming tangled with the band 260A, thus making it possible to improve the its usability for a user.

In this case, in the strap 301, since the left headphone code 302B and the right headphone code 302C of the headphone 303 are laid on the back plane of the band 260A, only the front surface having designs and logos written thereon, of the band 260A can be visible, thus it looks much nicer and is more fashionable.

Further, in the strap 301, as to the headphone 303 comprising the left headphone code 302B and the right headphone code 302C which have the same length, the left headphone code 302B and the headphone code 302C are each integrated with the band 260A, thereby the right headphone code 302 does not pass in front of the lower part of the user's neck, which can allow the user to use it smartly.

In the strap according to the aforementioned constitution, a total of four guiding holes 32A, 32B and 32C, 32D are provided on the back plane of the band 260A, and the left headphone code 302B and the right headphone code 302C of the headphone 303 are passed through the guiding holes 32A, 32B and 32C, 32D, respectively. Thereby, the left headphone code 302B and the right headphone code 302C can be integrated with the band 260A, and they are prevented from becoming tangled with the band 260A, which can improve the usability and the user can use comfortably.

Note that, the foregoing embodiment has dealt with the case

front of the breast when being dangled from a user's neck. However, the present invention is not limited to this but also the length can be freely adjusted by attaching a length adjusting means to the band 260A, 282.

Further, the foregoing embodiment has dealt with the case where cloth is used as material for the band 260A, 260B and 282 of the strap 31, 301. However, the present invention is not limited to this but also a metal chain or the like can be used.

Furthermore, the foregoing embodiment has dealt with the case where the digital reproducing device 4 is attached to the strap 31, 301. However, the present invention is not limited to this but also a portable radio, a portable telephone to which a headphone is attached to use without hands, a head-mount display and the like can be attached.

Industrial Applicability

The present invention can be applied to a portable recording and/or reproducing device, such as a portable music reproducing device and a portable terminal including a portable telephone and PDA, for recording and/or reproducing digital data to/from a built-in recording medium or a removable recording medium.

Claims

1. A portable recording and/or reproducing device, comprising:

reproducing means for performing reproduction processing on digital data read out from a predetermined recording medium recording said digital data;

manipulating means for making an instruction of reproducing said digital data recorded in said recording medium;

control means for reading said digital data from said recording medium in accordance with said reproduction instruction input with said manipulating means, sending it to said reproducing means, and controlling said reproducing means so as to perform the reproduction processing on said digital data; and

a cylindrical case for containing said reproducing means and said control means, and wherein

said control means is provided on one end side on one plane in the longitudinal direction of said cylindrical case.

2. The portable recording and/or reproducing device according to Claim 1, comprising:

digital-to-analog converting means for producing an analog signal by digital-to-analog converting said digital data which has been subjected to the reproduction processing by said reproducing means; and

a jack provided on said one end side in said longitudinal direction of the case to allow an external connection plug to be

inserted therein, which has a terminal for outputting said analog signal obtained from said digital-to-analog converting means, to said connection plug inserted.

3. The portable recording and/or reproducing device according to Claim 2, wherein

said jack is provided in said case so that said connection plug is projected from the other end side toward one end side in said longitudinal direction.

4. The portable recording and/or reproducing device according to Claim 3, wherein

said jack is provided so that the direction of inserting said connection plug is slant with respect to said longitudinal direction of said case.

5. The portable recording and/or reproducing device according to Claim 1, comprising

strap attaching means which is provided on said one end side in the longitudinal direction of said case for attaching a predetermined strap thereto.

6. The portable recording and/or reproducing device according to Claim 5, wherein

said strap attaching means allows said dangling strap to be

attached thereto.

7. The portable recording and/or reproducing device according to Claim 1, comprising:

a circuit board which is contained in said case with loading an Integrated Circuit package which constitutes at least a part of said control means; and

projecting parts for containing a part of said circuit board, which are formed so that a part of said case projects in accordance with the form of said circuit board.

8. The portable recording and/or reproducing device according to Claim 7, wherein

said projecting parts are formed in said longitudinal direction of said case.

9. The portable recording and/or reproducing device according to Claim 1, comprising

a clip which is provided on said one end side in said longitudinal direction of said case to attach the case to a user's body, clothes, and belongings;

10. The portable recording and/or reproducing device according to Claim 1, comprising:

an interface for taking in said digital data which is

from said recording medium, in accordance with said reproduction instruction input with said manipulating means.

15. The portable recording and/or reproducing device according to Claim 1, wherein

said case is formed in a cylindrical form.

16. A portable recording and/or reproducing device, comprising:
reproducing means for performing reproduction processing on digital data which is read out from a predetermined recording medium recording said digital data;

manipulating means for making an instruction of reproducing said digital data recorded in said recording medium;

control means for reading out said digital data from said recording medium in accordance with said reproduction instruction input with said manipulating means, sending it to said reproducing means, and controlling said reproducing means so as to perform the reproduction processing on said digital data;

a cylindrical case for containing said reproducing means and said control means;

a strap attaching means provided on one end side in the longitudinal direction of said cylindrical case; and

a strap to be attached to said strap attaching means, and wherein

said manipulating means is provided on said one end side of

[illegible]

17. The portable recording and/or reproducing device according to Claim 16, comprising:

digital-to-analog converting means for producing an analog signal by digital-to-analog converting said digital data which has been subjected to the reproduction processing by said reproducing means; and

a jack provided on said one end side in said longitudinal direction of said case to allow an external connection plug to be inserted therein, which has a terminal for outputting said analog signal obtained from said digital-to-analog converting means to said connection plug inserted, and wherein

said strap has a ring part and a holding means for integrally holding a code introduced from said connection plug and said ring part.

18. The portable recording and/or reproducing device according to Claim 17, wherein

said ring part comprises:

band member; and

sticking means for sticking one end on the back plane of said band member to the other end on the front plane of the band member.

accordance with the reproduction instruction and the read digital data is subjected to the reproduction processing; and

when said manipulating means is manipulated to make an instruction of stopping the reproduction of said digital data while performing said reproduction processing on said digital data, the reproduction of the digital data is stopped.

34. A reproducing method, wherein:

manipulating means provided on one end side on one plane in the longitudinal direction of a cylindrical case is manipulated with a user's thumb to make an instruction of reproducing digital data recorded in a predetermined recording medium which is removably stored in said case, said digital data is read out from said recording medium inserted in said case in accordance with the reproduction instruction and the digital data read is subjected to the reproduction processing; and

when manipulating means is manipulated with the user's thumb to make an instruction of stopping the reproduction of said digital data while performing said reproduction processing on said digital data, the reproduction of the digital data is stopped.

35. A recording/reproducing method, wherein:

digital data which is transferred from outside is taken in an interface provided in a cylindrical case and is recorded in a predetermined recording medium which is removably inserted in the

ABSTRACT

A reproducing means for performing reproduction processing on digital data which is read out from a predetermined recording medium recording the digital data, a manipulating means for making an instruction of reproducing the digital data inserted in the recording medium, a control means for reading the digital data from the recording medium in accordance with the reproduction instruction input with the manipulating means and sending it to the reproducing means, and for controlling the reproducing means to perform reproduction processing on the digital data, and a cylindrical case for containing the reproducing means and the control means are provided, and wherein the manipulating means is provided on one end side on one plane in the longitudinal direction of the cylindrical case. Thereby the user can manipulate the manipulating means without taking out a portable recording and/or reproducing device from a bag or a pocket, thus making it possible to remarkably improve its manipulation.

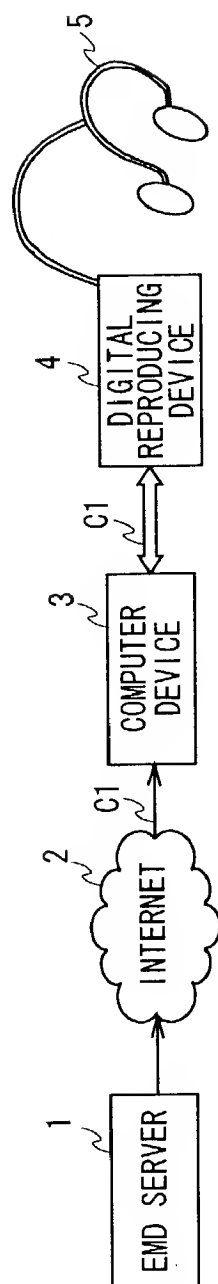


FIG. 1

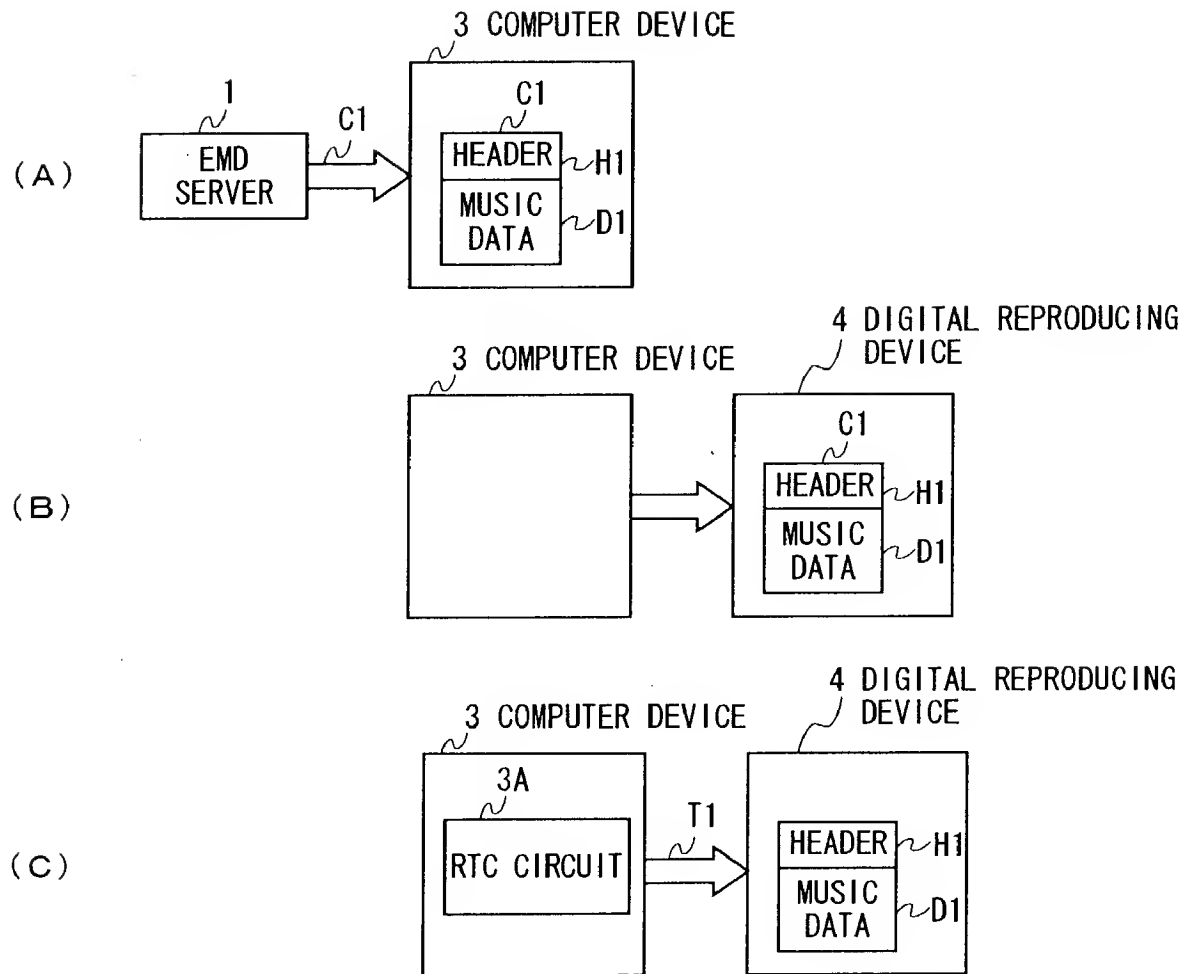


FIG. 2

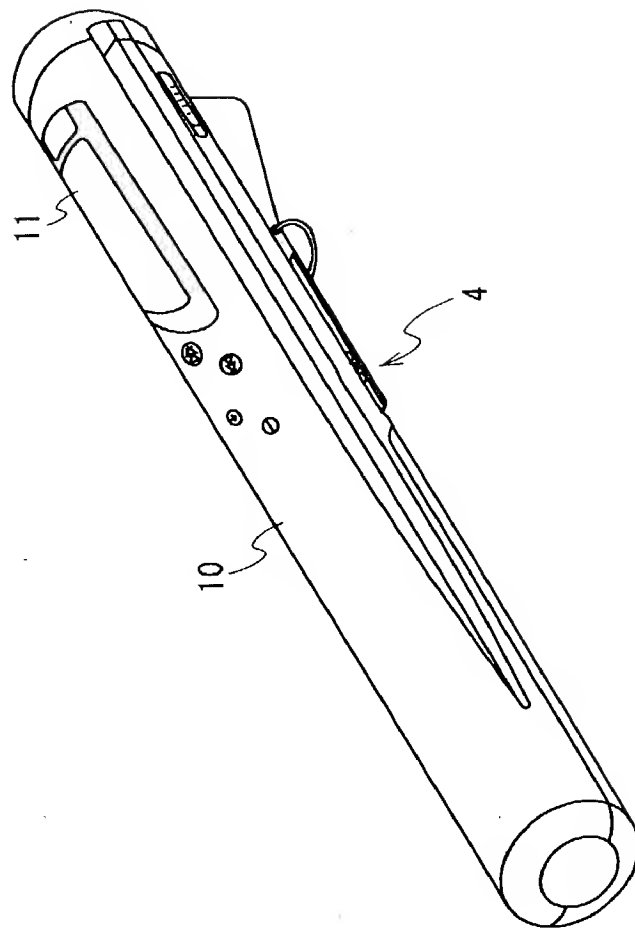


FIG. 3

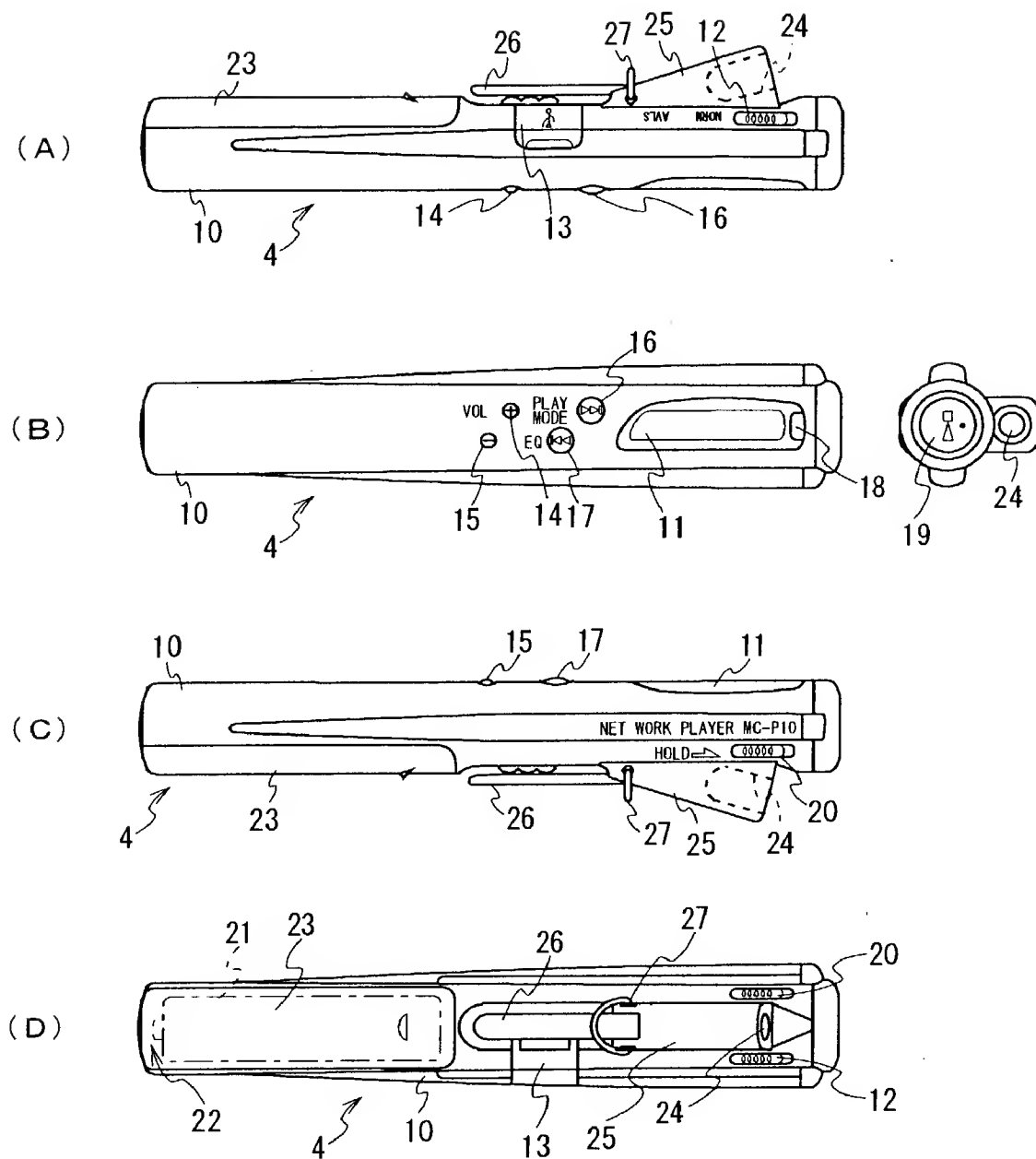


FIG. 4

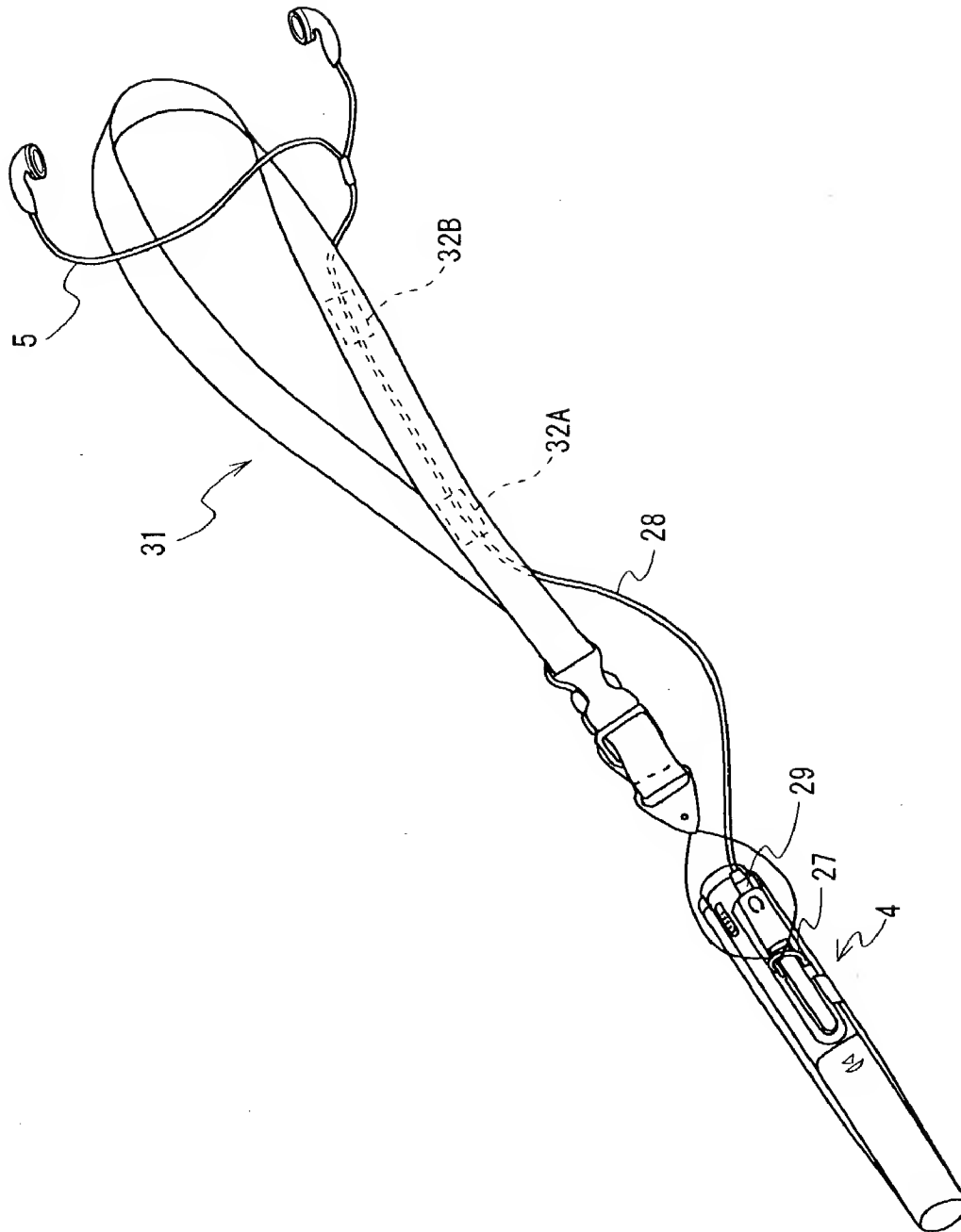


FIG. 5

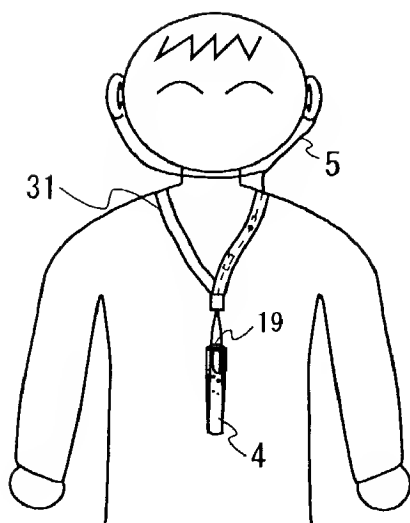


FIG. 6

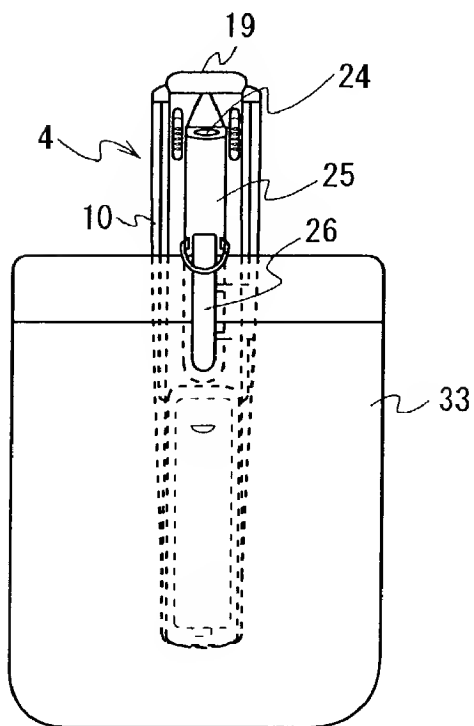


FIG. 8

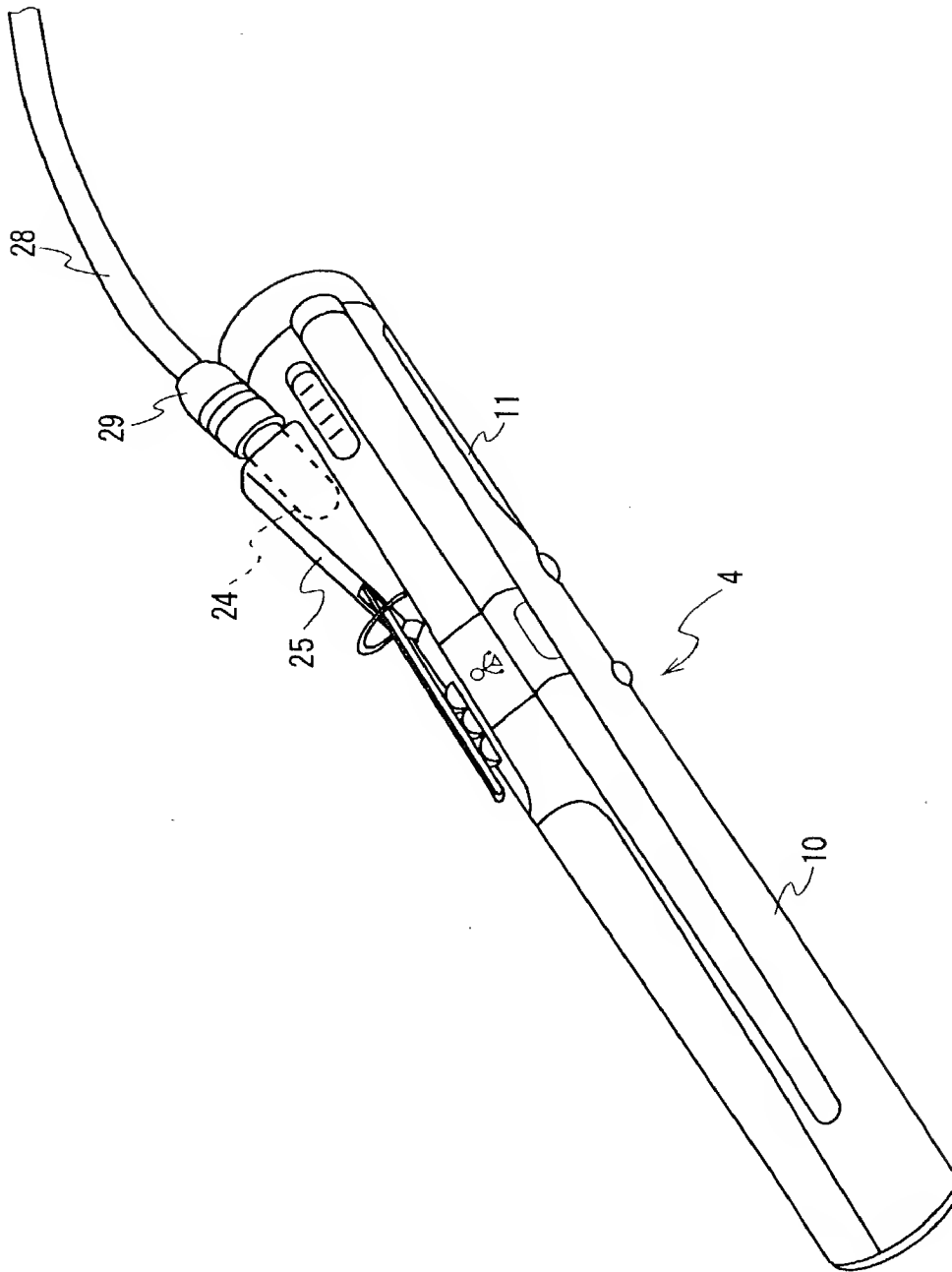


FIG. 7

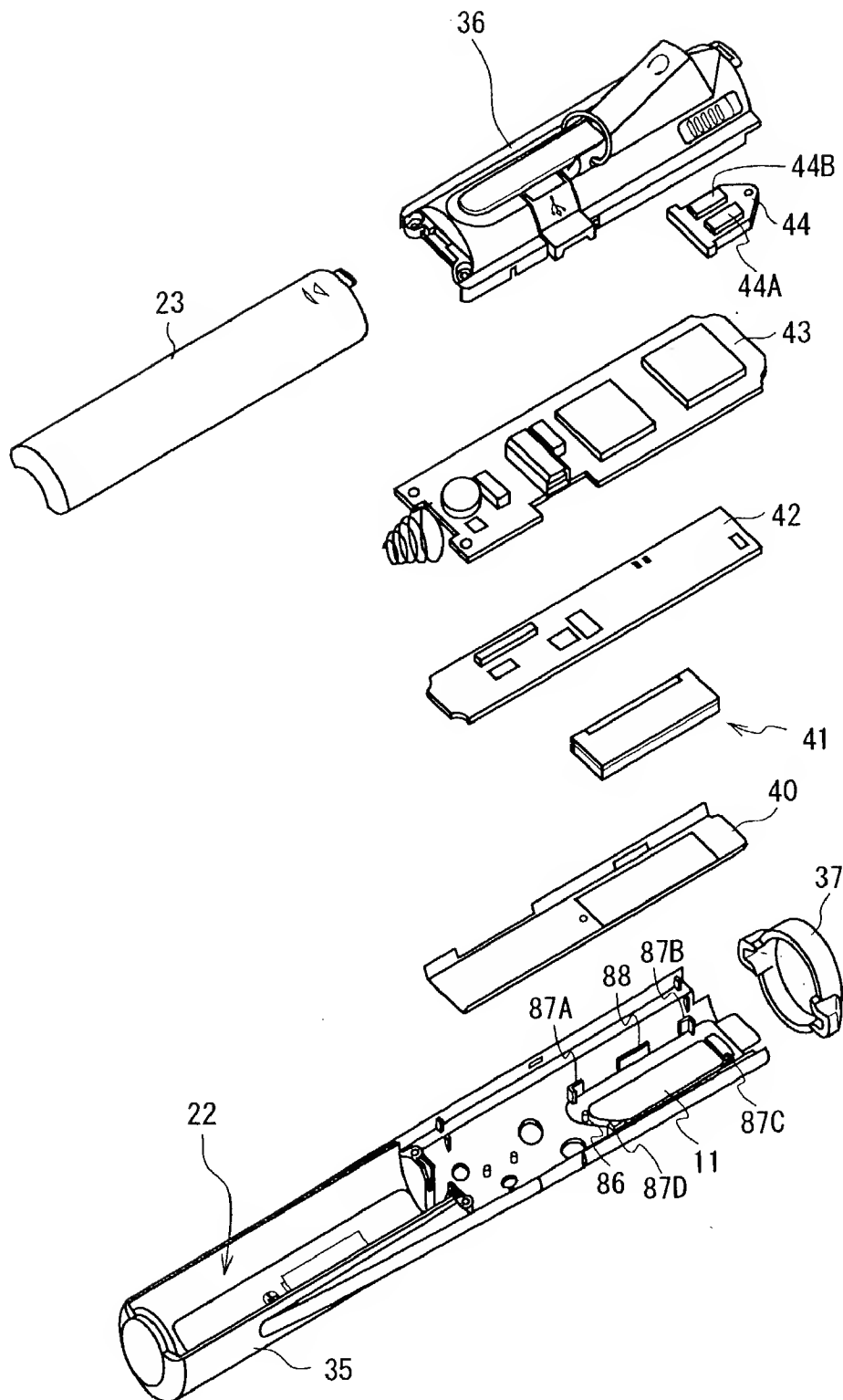


FIG. 9

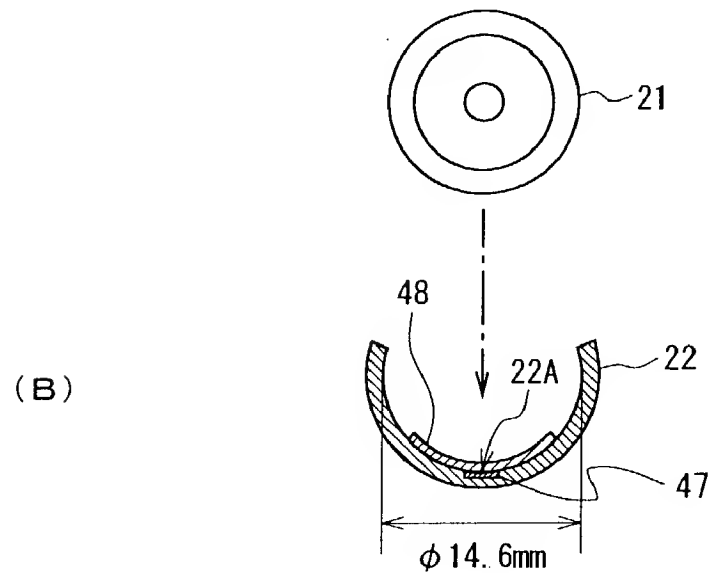
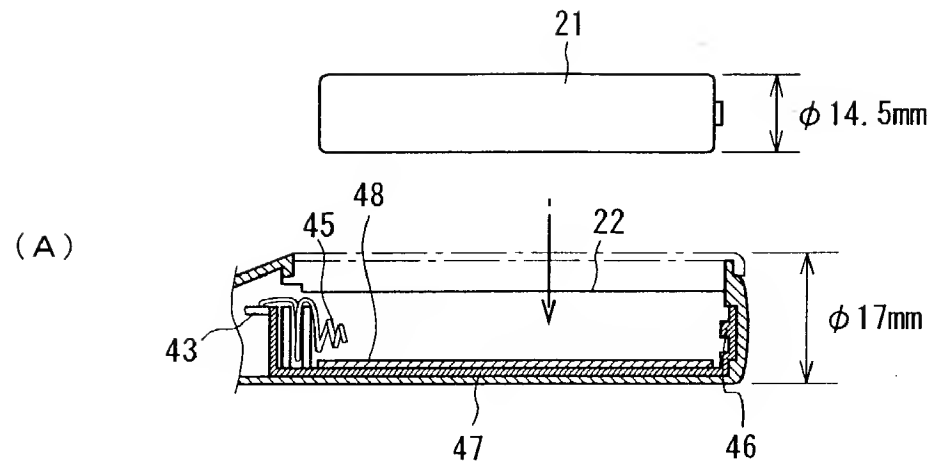


FIG. 10

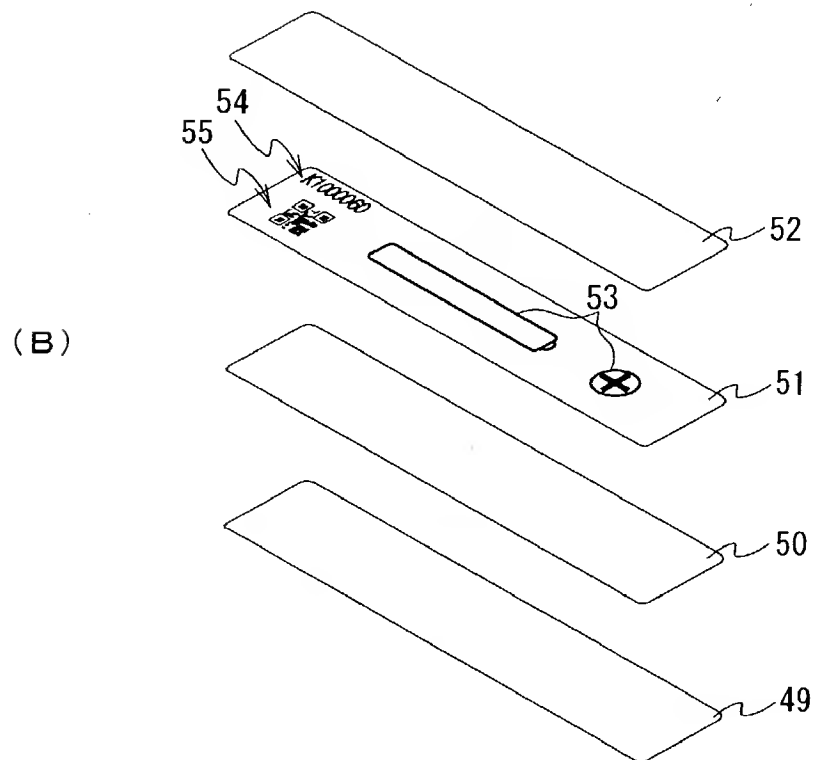
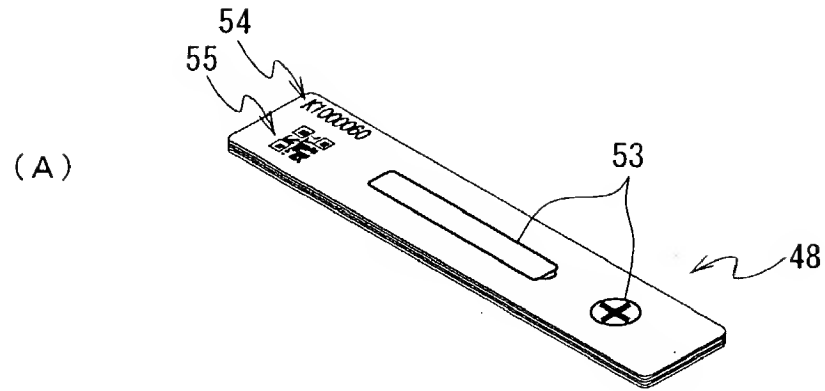


FIG. 11

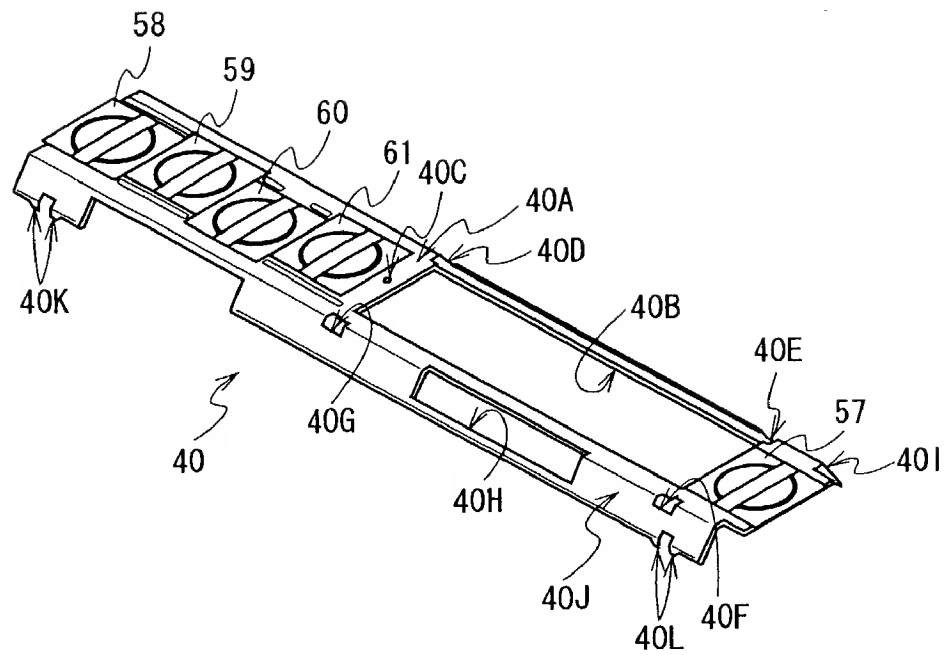


FIG. 12

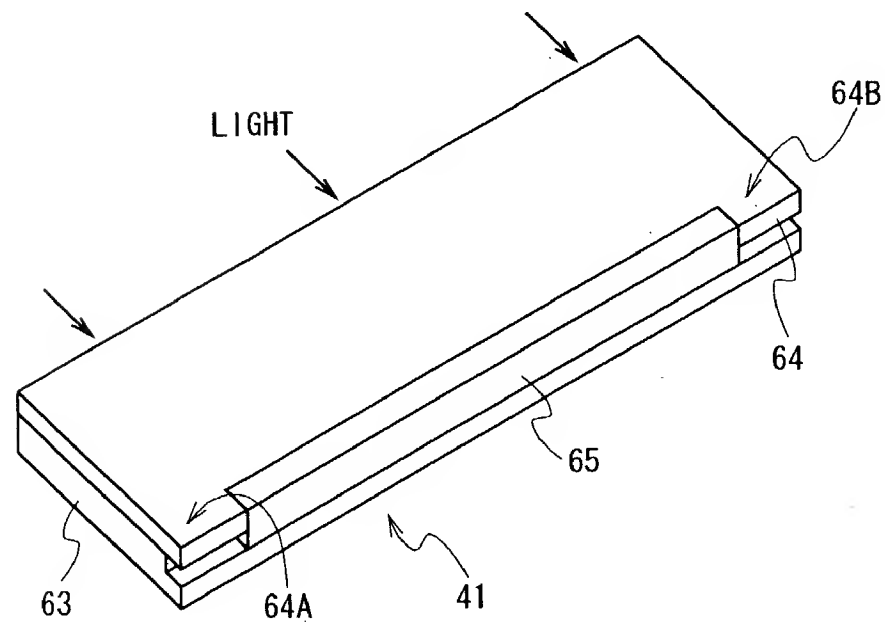


FIG. 13

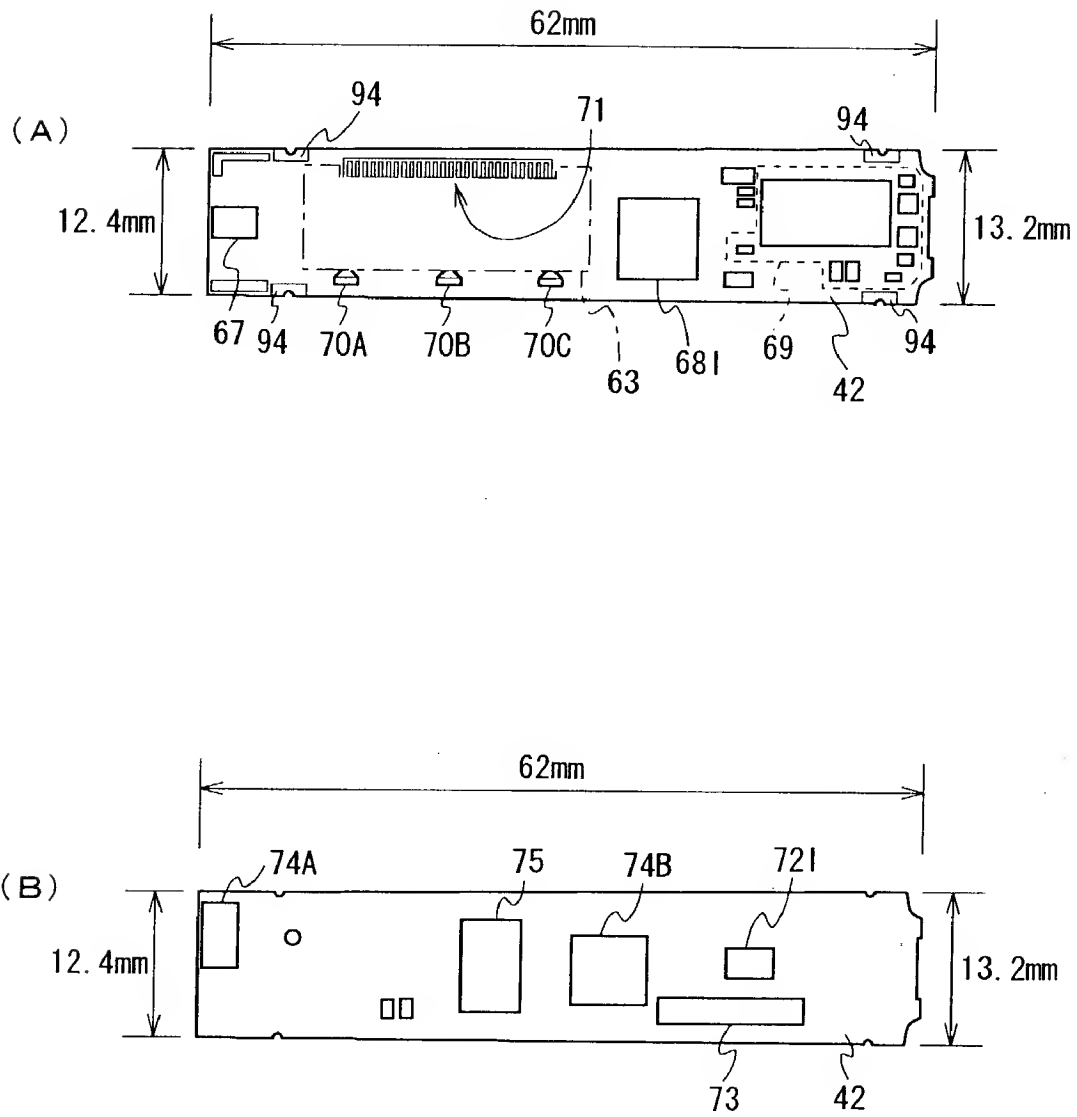


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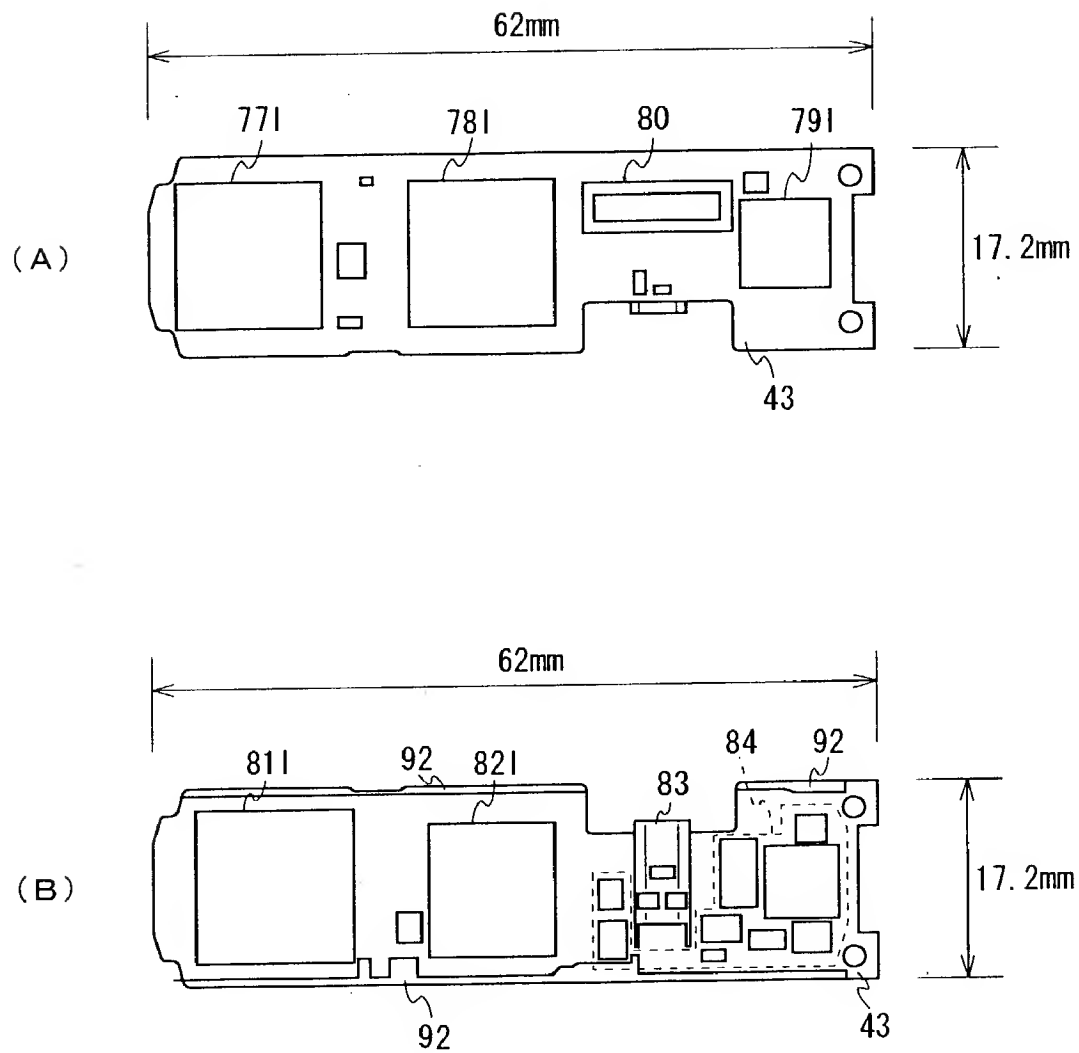


FIG. 15

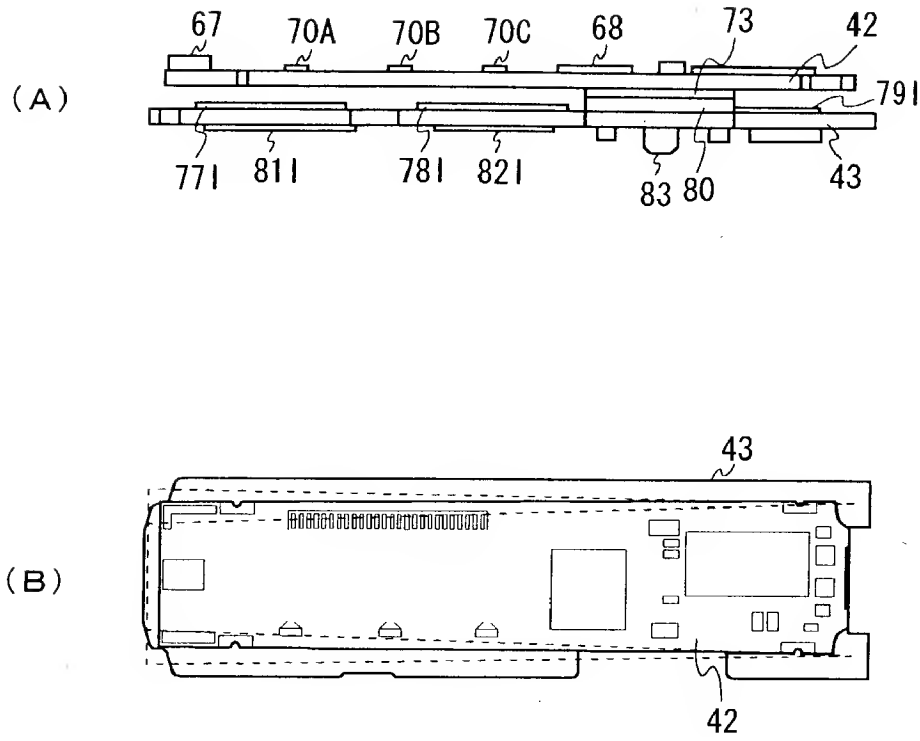


FIG. 16

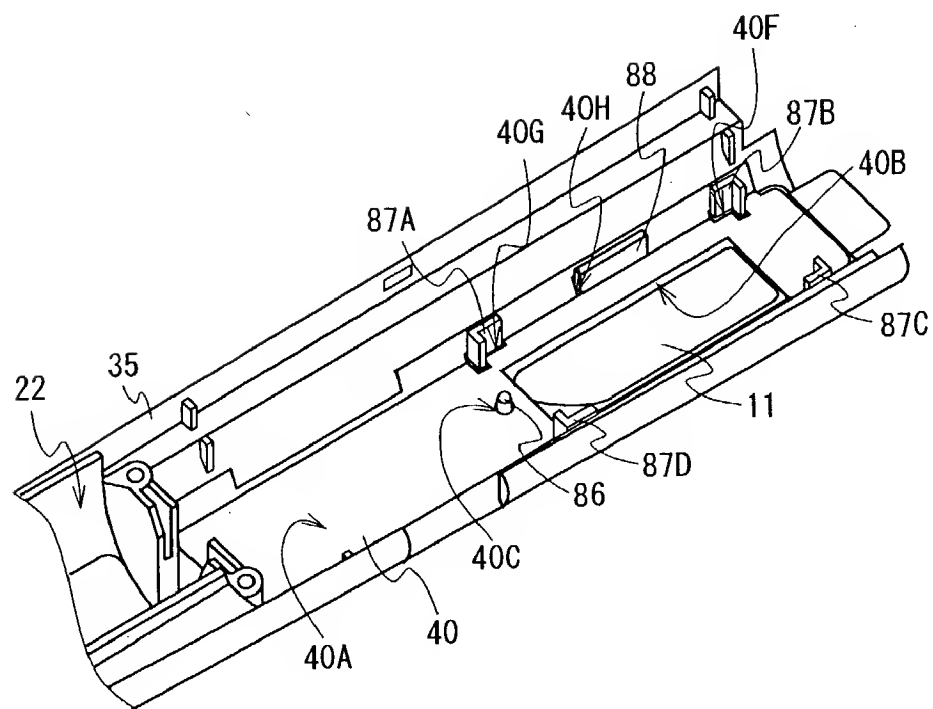


FIG. 17

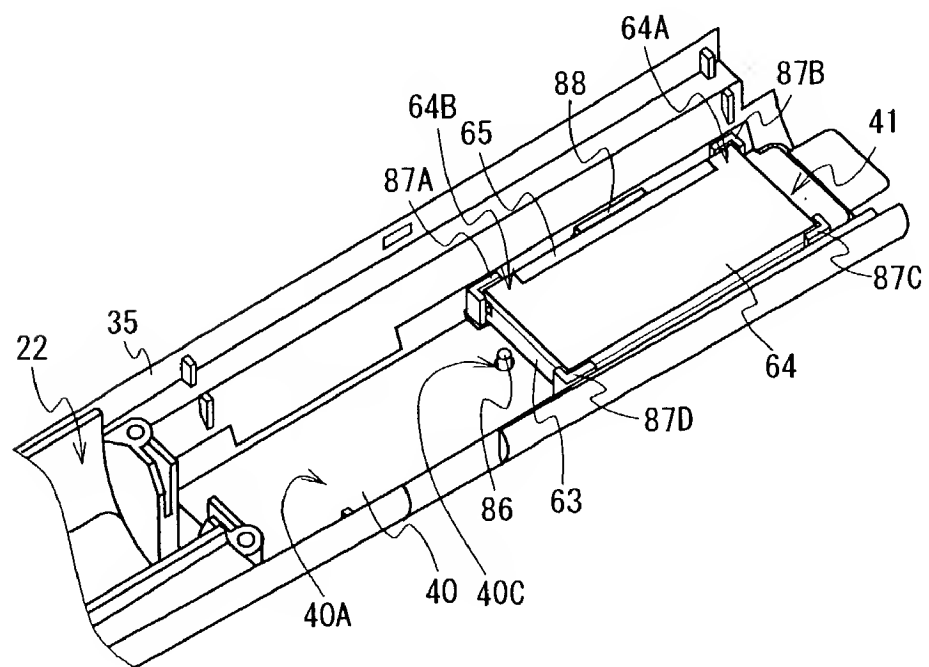


FIG. 18

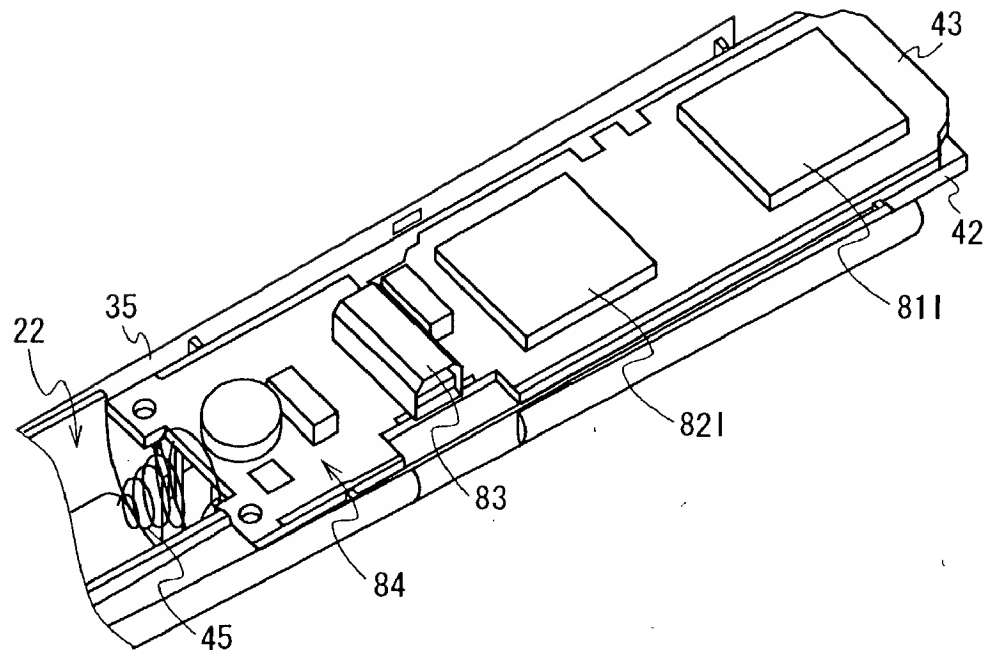


FIG. 19

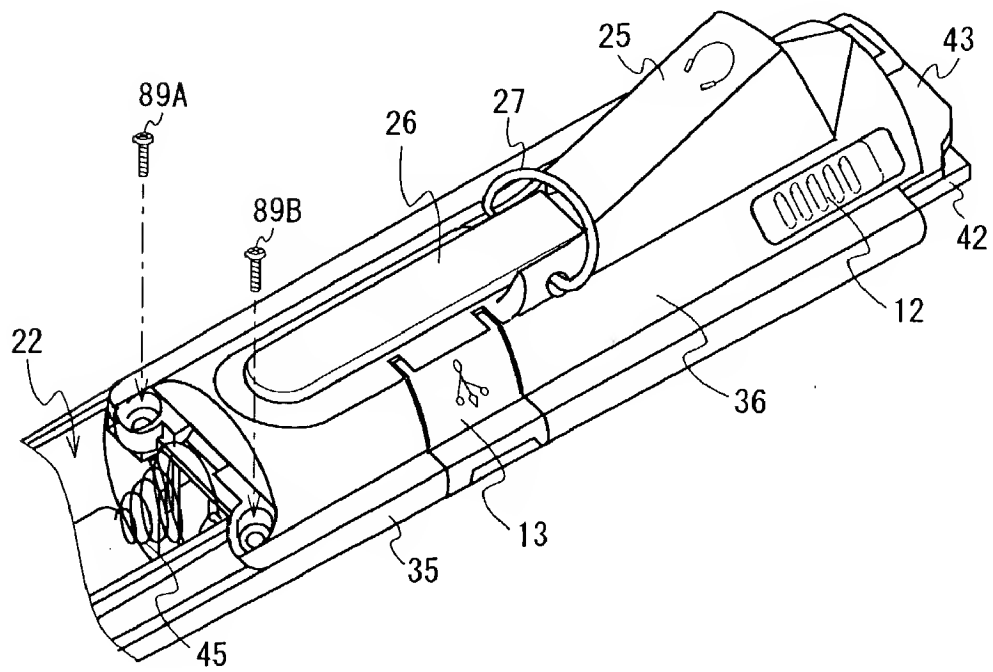


FIG. 20

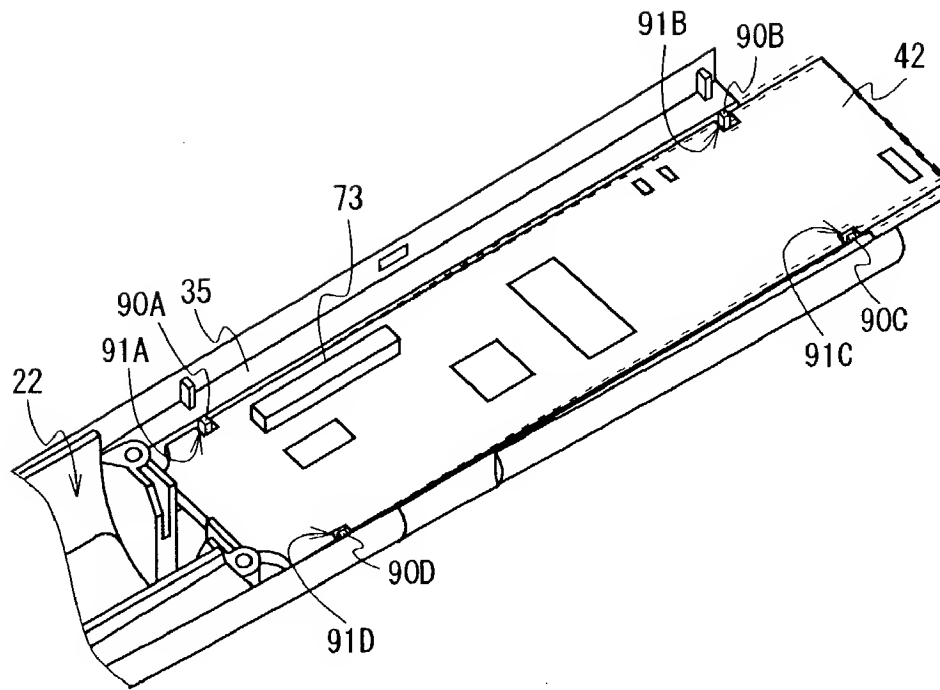


FIG. 21

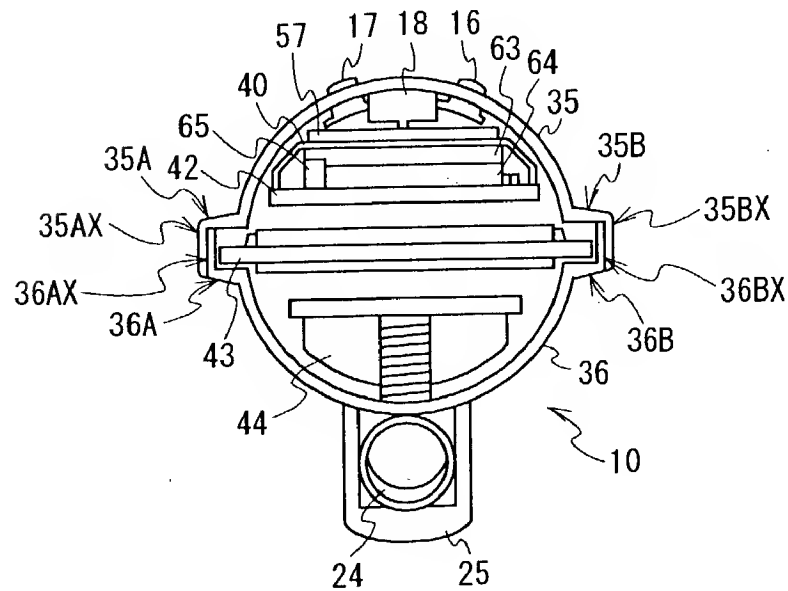


FIG. 22

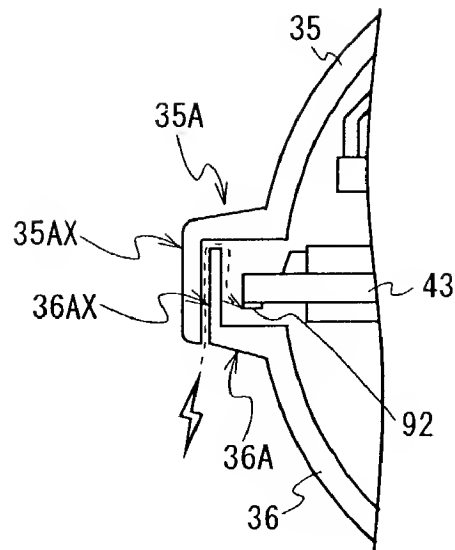


FIG. 23

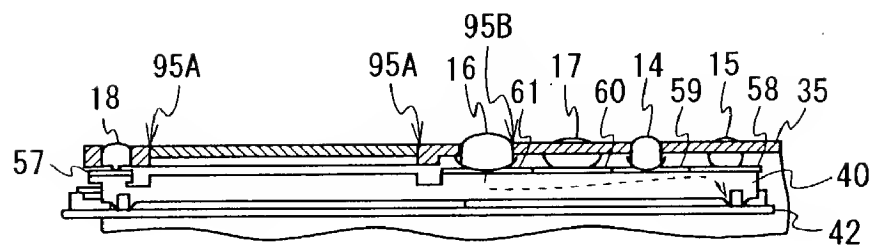


FIG. 24

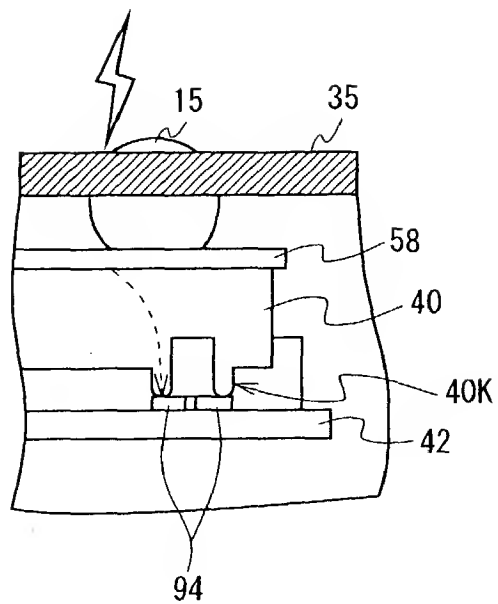


FIG. 25

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	FILE SIZE			
	CODEC ID			
	FILE NAME			
	FILE INFORMATION (TITLE, ARTIST NAME, ETC.)			
	REPRODUCTION LIMITATION DATA			
	REPRODUCTION STARTING DATE	REPRODUCTION FINISHING DATE	REPRODUCIBLE NUMBER OF TIMES	ACTUAL REPRODUCED NUMBER OF TIMES
D1	MUSIC DATA			

FIG. 27

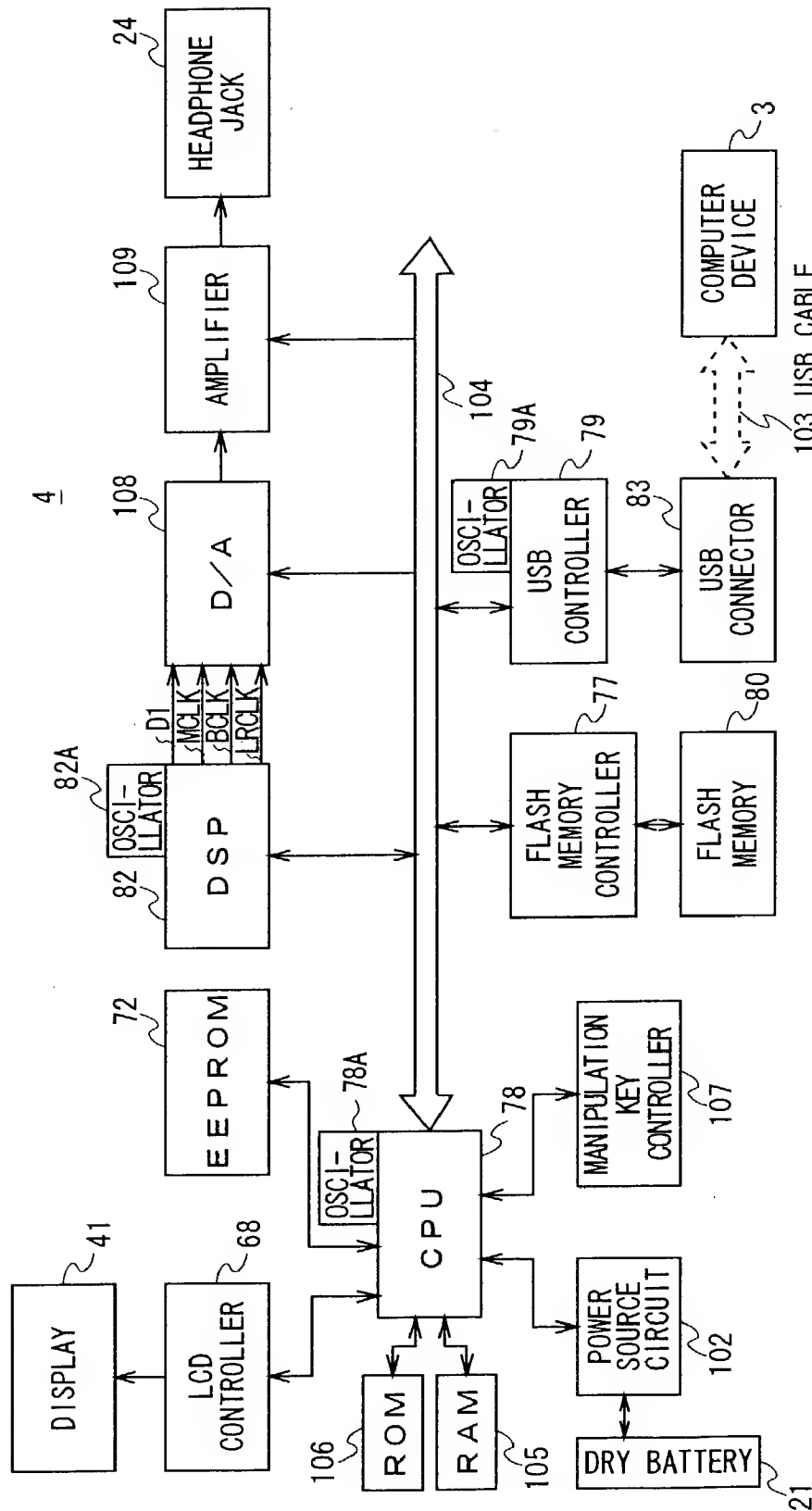


FIG. 26

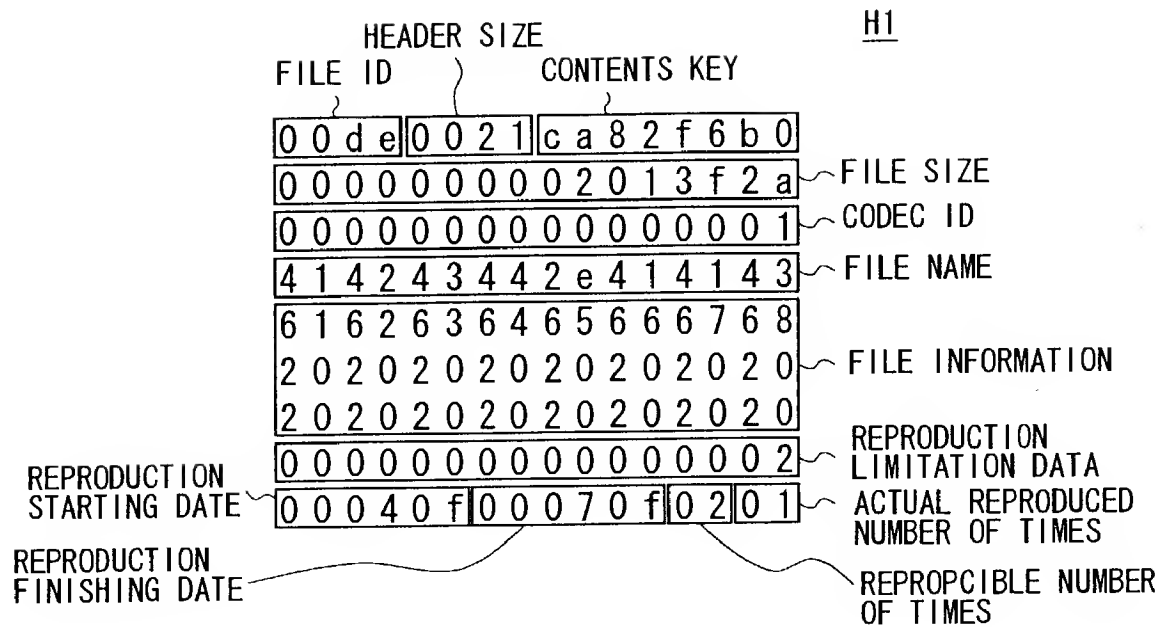


FIG. 28

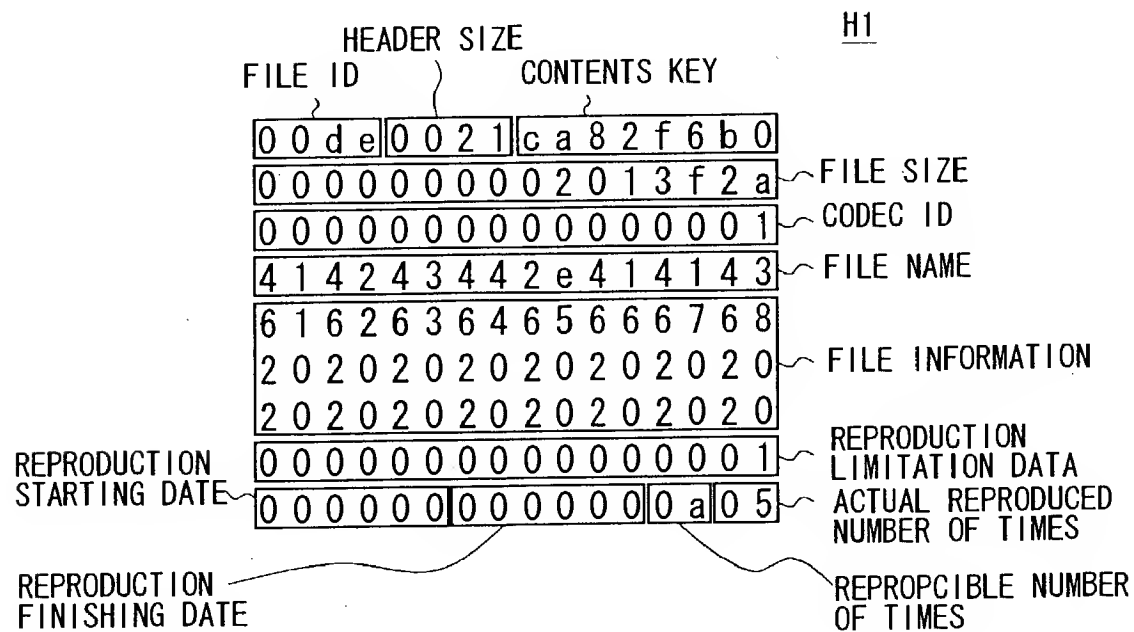


FIG. 29

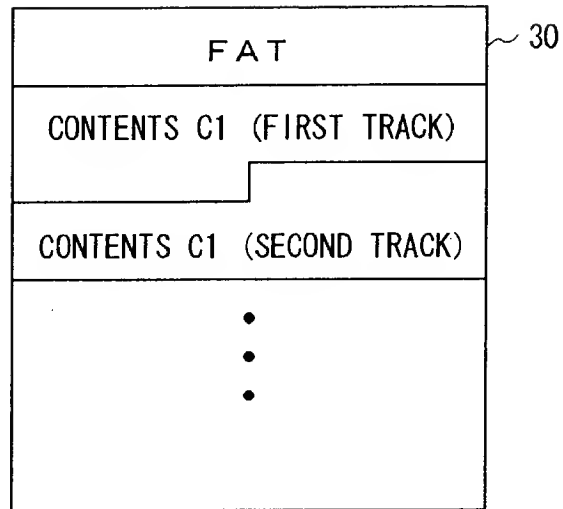


FIG. 30

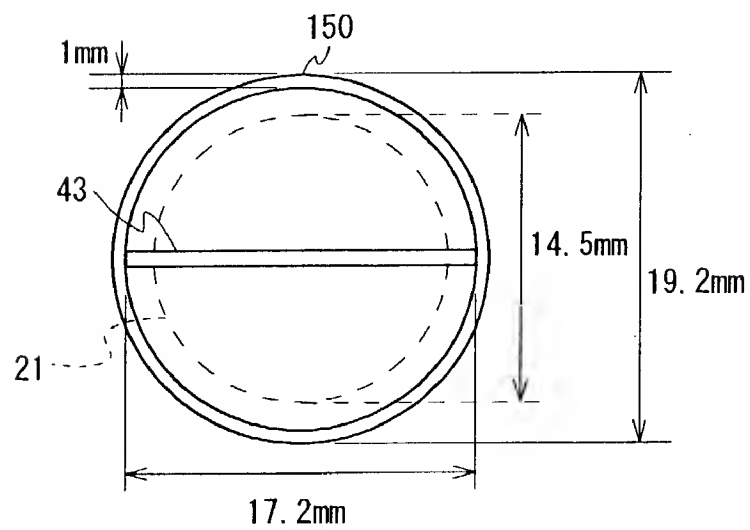


FIG. 31

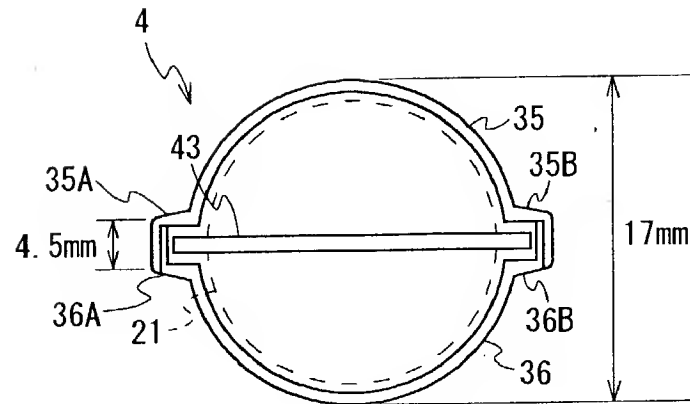


FIG. 32

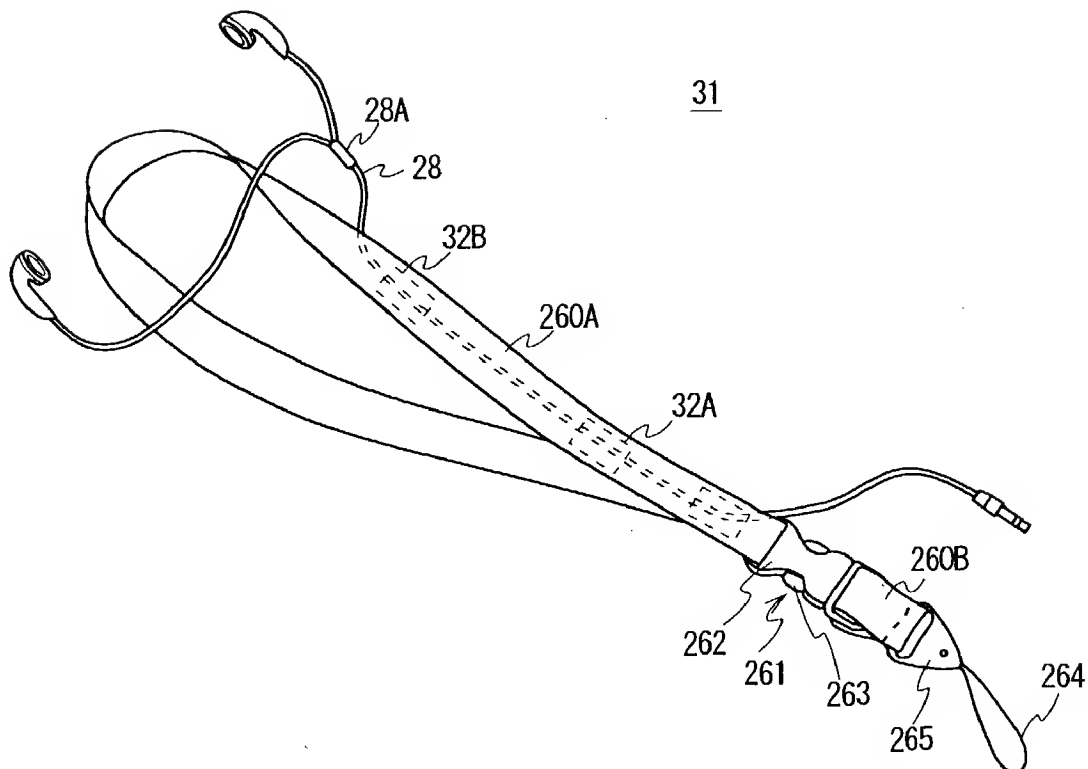


FIG. 33

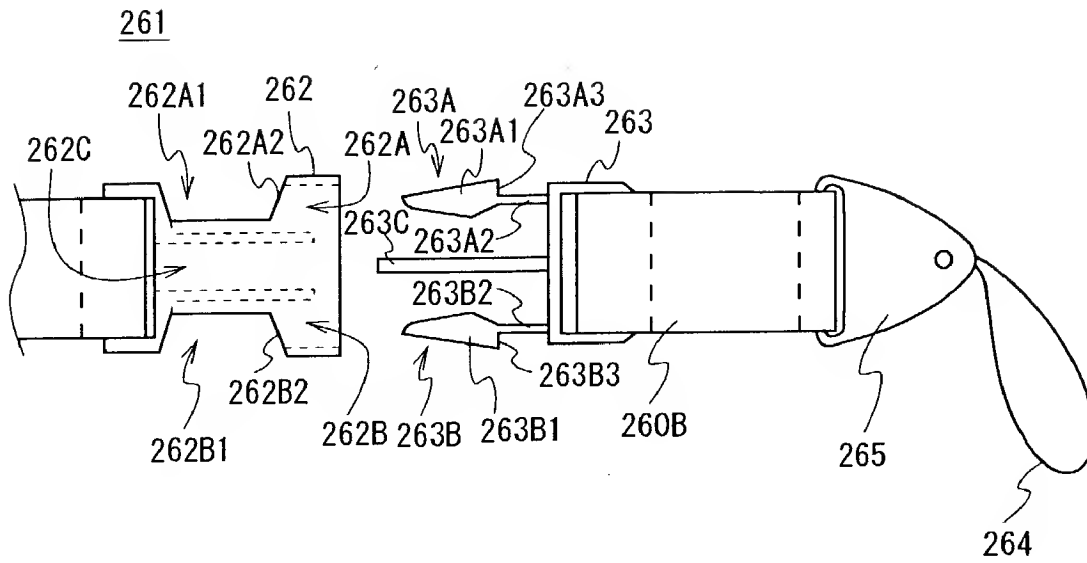


FIG. 34

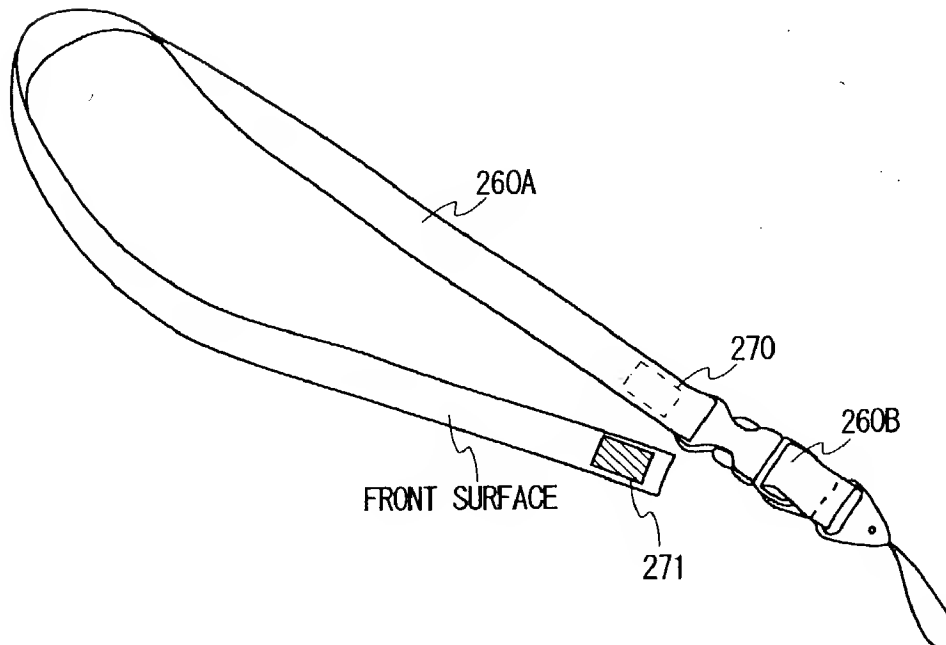


FIG. 35

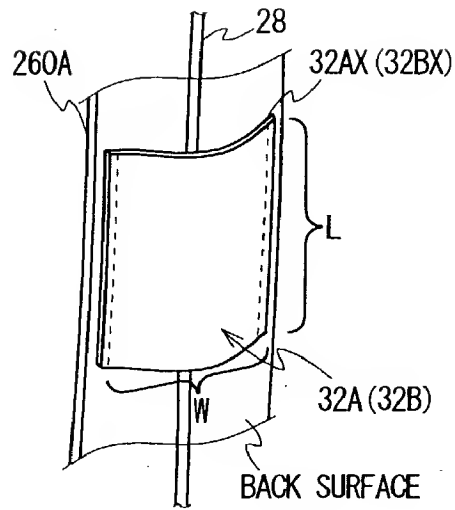


FIG. 36

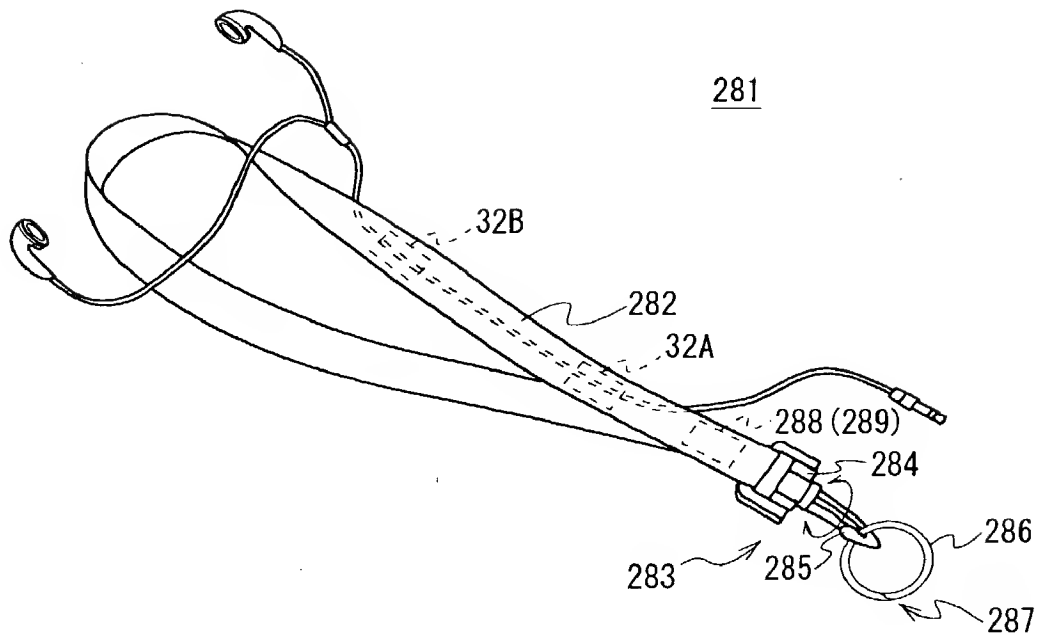


FIG. 38

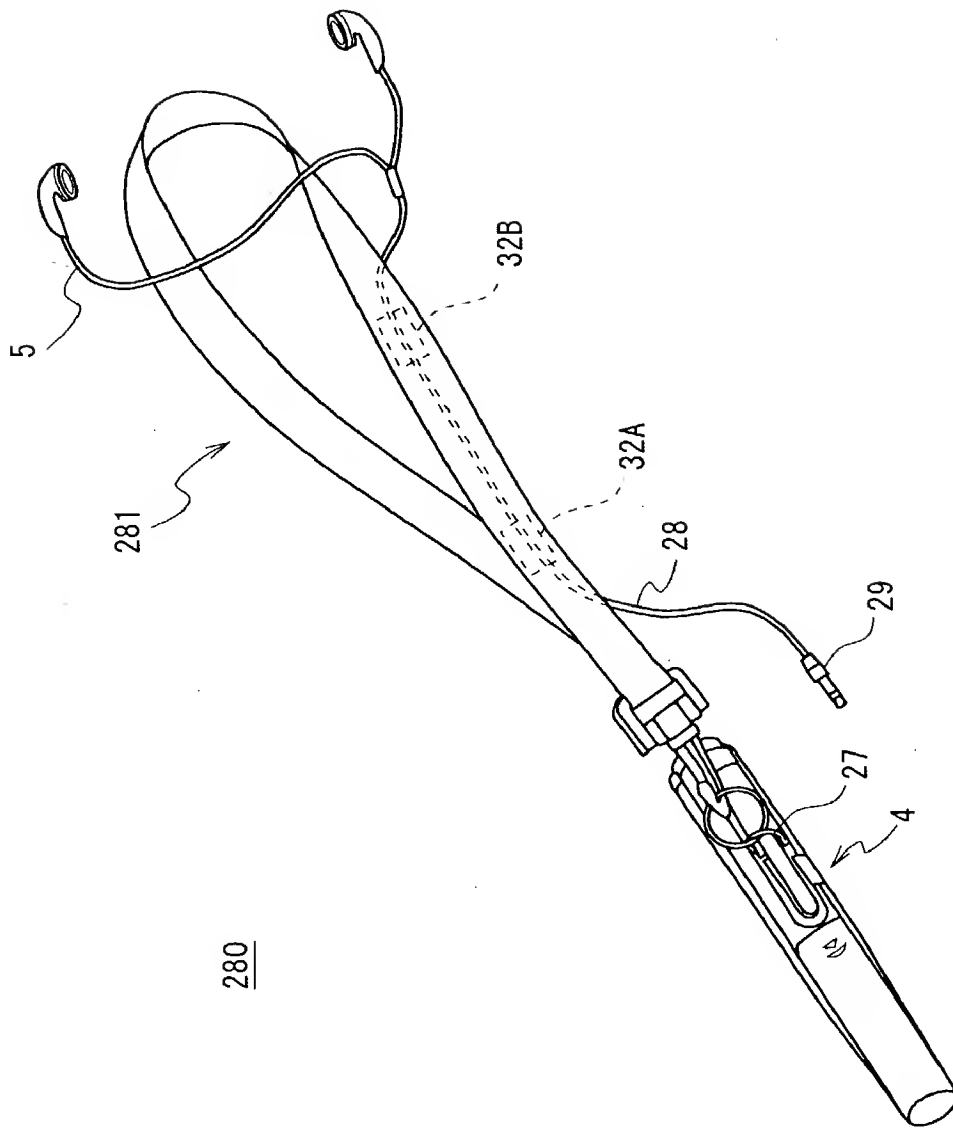


FIG. 37

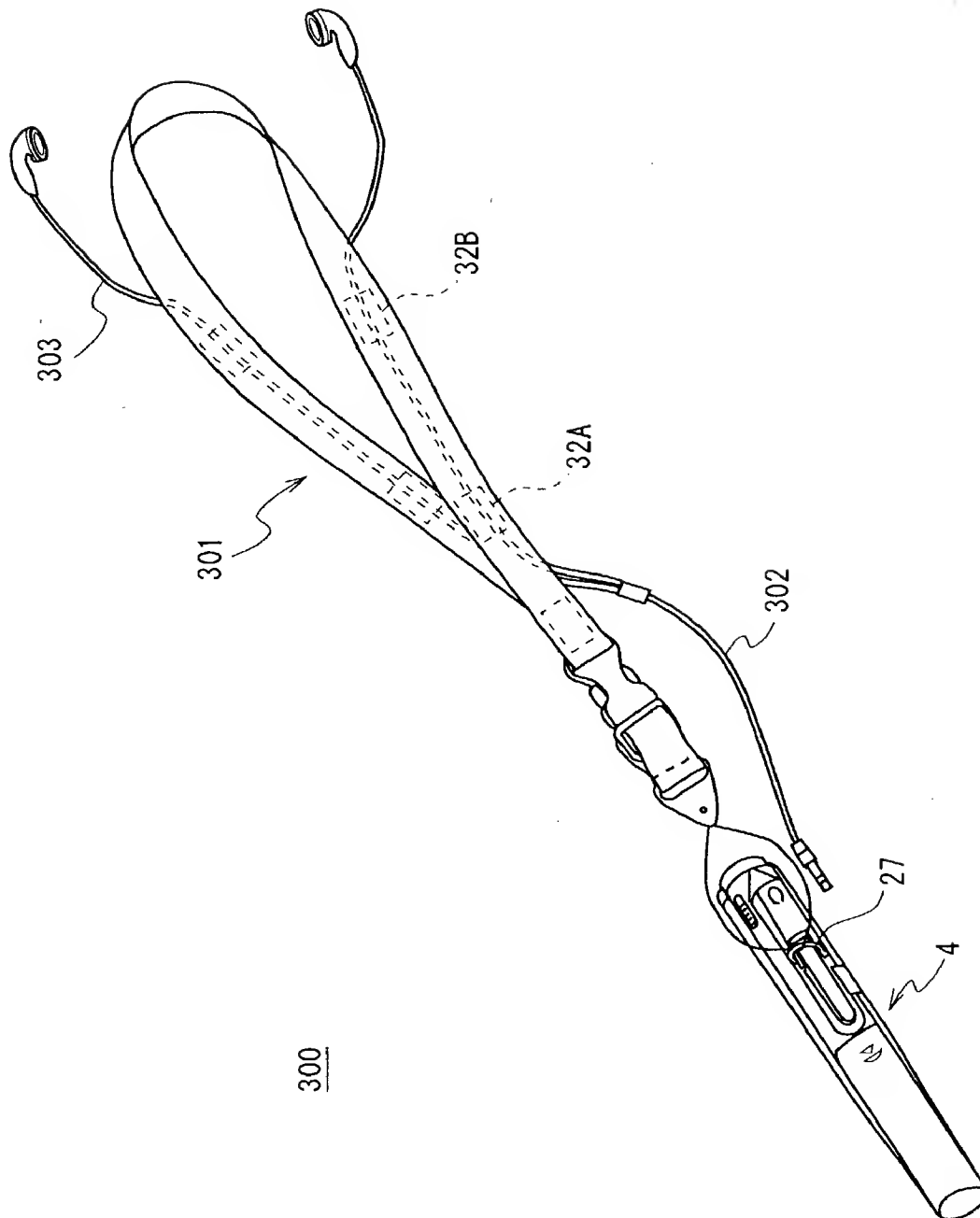


FIG. 39

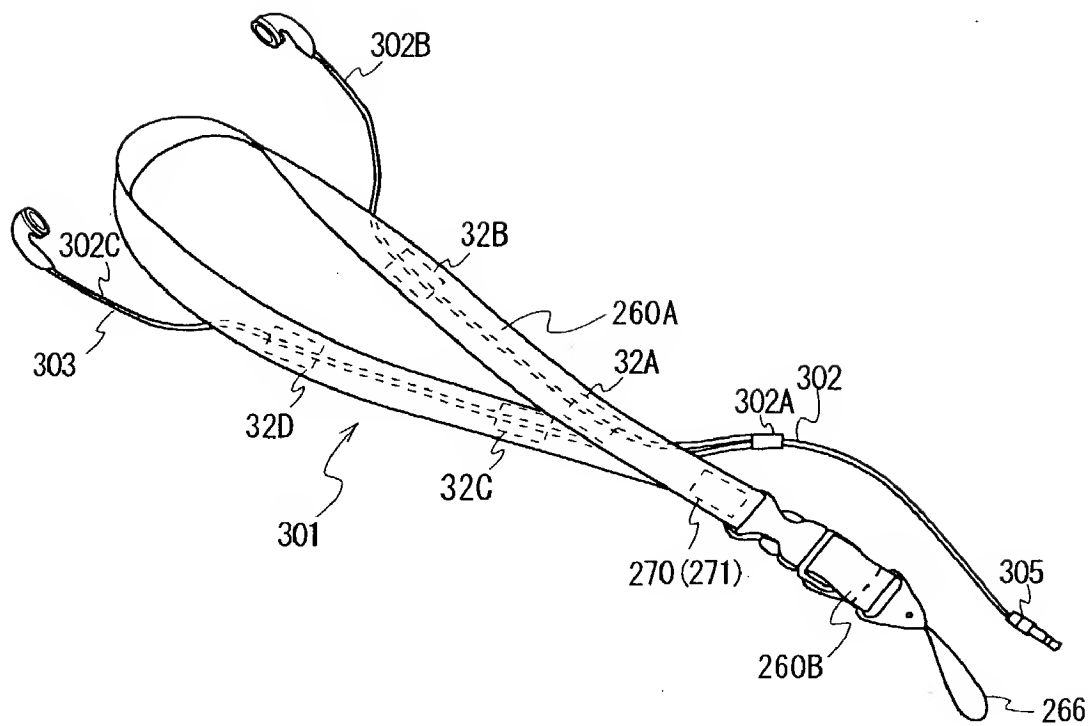


FIG. 40

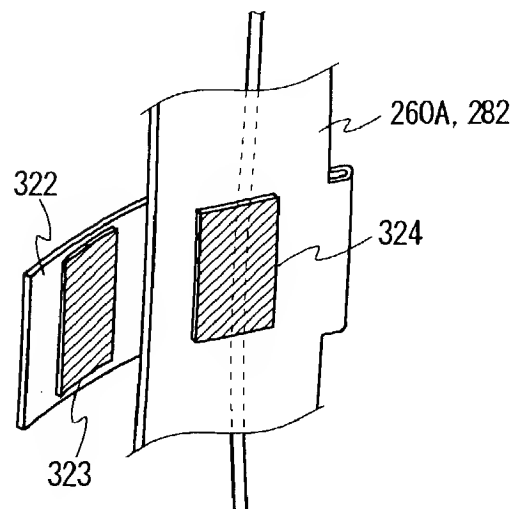


FIG. 42

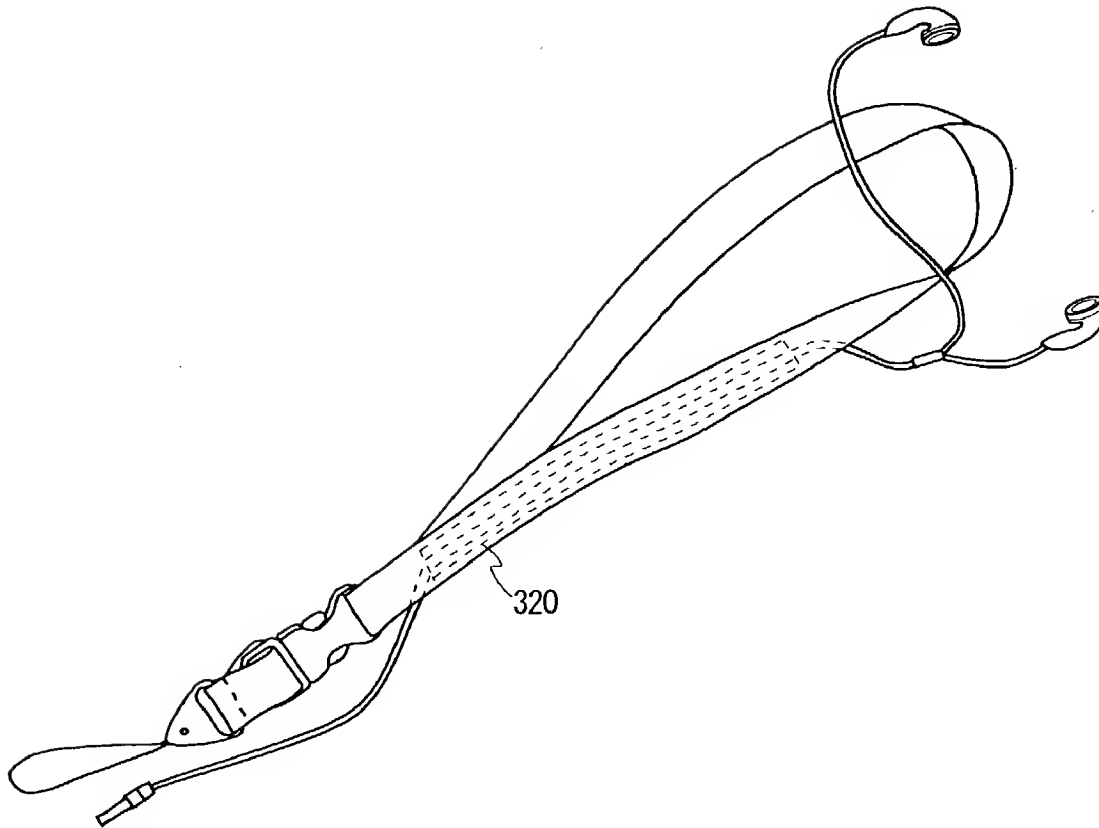


FIG. 41

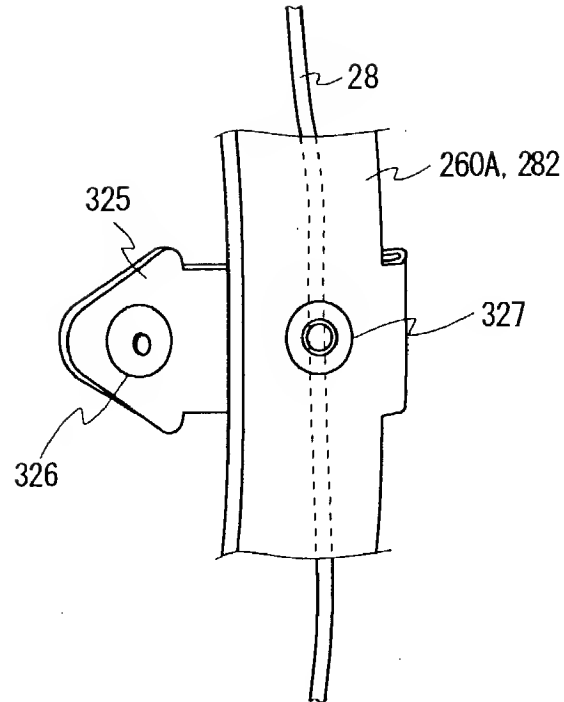


FIG. 43

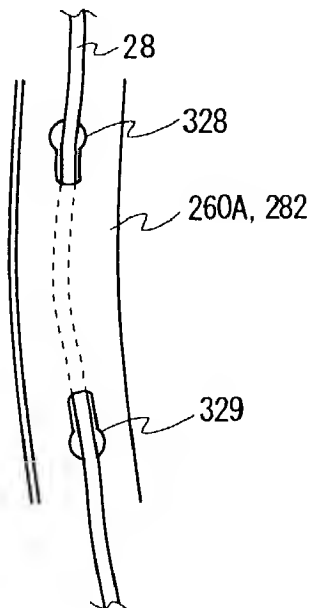


FIG. 44

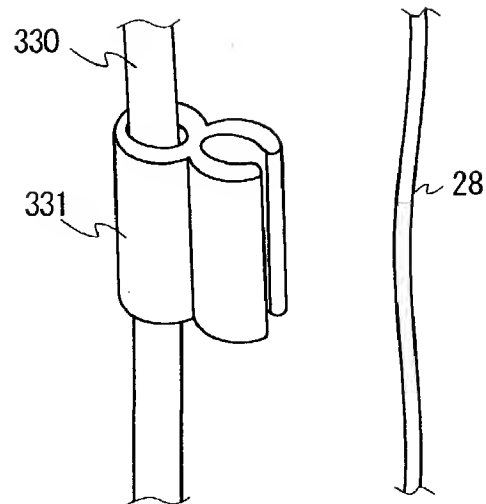


FIG. 45

Description of Reference Numerals

4... digital reproducing device, 5, 303... headphone, 10...
housing case, 19... play/stop button, 24... headphone jack, 27...
strap fitting, 28, 302... headphone code, 29, 305... plug, 31, 281,
301... dangling strap, 35... front side case, 35A, 36B, 36A, 36B...
rib, 35AX, 35BX, 36AX, 36BX... fitting part, 36... back side case,
37... button holding part, 43... main circuit board, 77... flash
memory controller, 78... CPU, 79... USB controller, 80...
semiconductor flash memory, 82... DSP, 83... USB connector, 108...
digital-to-analog converter, 260A, 282... band, 32A, 32B, 32C, 32D,
320... guiding hole, 270, 271, 288, 289... sticking tape.



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7254/63012

DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY

As a below-named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address, and citizenship are as stated below next to my name.

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled:

PORTABLE RECORDING AND/OR REPRODUCING DEVICE, REPRODUCING
METHOD, AND RECORDING/REPRODUCING METHOD

the specification of which
(check one)

_____ is attached hereto.

X was filed on June 13, 2001 (International Filing Date) as

International Application No. 09/868,029

corresponding to _____

and was amended on _____

(if applicable)

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above-identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information of which I am aware which is material to the examination of this application in accordance with Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 1.56(a).

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code, Section 119 of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed:

Prior Foreign Application(s)

Priority Claimed

<u>Number</u>	<u>Country</u>	<u>Filing Date</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
<u>P11-361435</u> ✓	<u>Japan</u> ✓	<u>November 14, 1999</u> ✓	<u>X</u>	_____
<u>P11-361439</u>	<u>Japan</u>	<u>November 14, 1999</u>	_____	<u>X</u>
<u>P11-361443</u>	<u>Japan</u>	<u>November 14, 1999</u>	_____	<u>X</u>

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7254/63012

Declaration and Power of Attorney

Page 2

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, Section 120 of any United States Application(s) listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code, Section 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose material information as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 1.56(a) which occurred between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application:

<u>Application Serial No.</u>	<u>Filing Date</u>	<u>Status</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

10 - And I hereby appoint Jay H. Maioli, Reg. No. 27,213; Donald S. Dowden, Reg. No. 20,701; William E. Pelton, Reg. No. 25,702; Peter J. Phillips, Reg. No. 29,691; Gerald W. Griffin, Reg. No. 18,886; Ivan S. Kavrukov, Reg. No. 25,161; Christopher C. Dunham, Reg. No. 22,031; Norman H. Zivin, Reg. No. 25,385; John P. White, Reg. No. 28,678; and Robert D. Katz, Reg. No. 30,141; and each and all of them, all c/o Cooper & Dunham, 1185 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10036 (Tel. (212) 278-0400), my attorneys, each with full power of substitution and revocation, to receive the patent, to transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith and to file any International Applications which are based thereon under the provisions of the Patent Cooperation Treaty.

Please address all communications, and direct all telephone calls, regarding this application to

JAY H. MAIOLI
Cooper & Dunham LLP
1185 Avenue of the Americas
New York, New York 10036
Tel. (212) 278-0400

Reg. No. 27,213

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

Full name of sole or

1-00 First joint inventor Shuichi Miyazaki

Inventor's signature Shuichi Miyazaki

Citizenship Japanese ✓

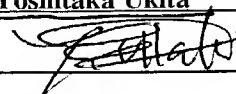
Date of Signature August 22, 2002

Residence Chiba, Japan SPX

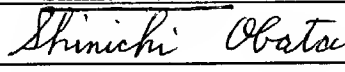
Post Office Address c/o Sony Kisarazu Corporation, 8-4 Shiomi,

Kisarazu-shi, Chiba-ken, Japan

S00P1399US00
7254/63012

2-00 Full name of sole or
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Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo, Japan

3-00 Full name of sole or
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Inventor's signature Fumihiko Yoshii
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Residence Tokyo, Japan JPX
Post Office Address c/o Sony Corporation, 7-35 Kitashinagawa, 6-chome,
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4-00 Full name of sole or
Fourth joint inventor Shinichi Obata
Inventor's signature 
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Residence Saitama, Japan JPX
Post Office Address c/o Sony Corporation, 7-35 Kitashinagawa, 6-chome,
Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo, Japan

S00P1399US00
7254/63012

5-00 Full name of sole or
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Inventor's signature Masahiko Fujiyoshi

Citizenship Japanese Date of Signature August 22, 2002

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Post Office Address c/o Sony Kisarazu Corporation, 8-4 Shiomi,
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6-00 Full name of sole or
Sixth joint inventor Masayuki Chiba

Inventor's signature Masayuki Chiba

Citizenship Japanese ✓ Date of Signature September 2, 2002

Residence Iwate, Japan JPX

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